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TRUE REPUBLICANISM

BY

FRANK PRESTON STEARNS

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TRUE REPUBLICANISM

OR

THE REAL AND IDEAL IN POLITICS

BY

FRANK PRESTON STEARNS

AUTHOR OF "THE REAL AND IDEAL IN LITERATURE," "SKETCHES OF CONCORD AND APPLEDORE," "MODERN ENGLISH PROSE WRITERS," "THE LIFE OF BISMARCK," ETC.

PHILADELPHIA AND LONDON

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

DAVID ATWOOD WASSON

THE PIONEER

IN AMERICAN POLITICAL

REFORM

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"Away with this hurrahing of the masses; and let us have each man's vote on his own conscience."

EMERSON

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PREFACE

THERE is a common misconception that republicanism and democracy are convertible terms. The difference can best be explained, perhaps, by examples. A late writer on politics spoke of Venice and Rome as democracies; but Venice was never a democracy, at least within historical times; and Rome only became a democracy during the ten years while Cæsar was in Gaul. Likewise, Holland was a republic in the time of Cromwell, but it did not become a democracy until it was revolutionized by Pichegru. Great Britain is now more democratic in some respects than the United States of America; that is, public opinion acts upon the government there more quickly and forcibly than it does here. Republicanism is a form, and democracy would seem to be more like a political condition. All that one can say of a government is that it is more or less democratic. Even in Germany there is universal suffrage, and the people control the financial budget. Republicanism means that the chief magistrate of a nation is an elective and not a hereditary ruler.

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Rational Republicanism	11
Alexander Hamilton	107
Abraham Lincoln	141
The Winter of 1861	184
Southern Reconstruction	196
The Ethics of War	223
Appendix	249
Index	257

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TRUE REPUBLICANISM

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RATIONAL REPUBLICANISM

In the preamble to the Constitution of the United States it says:

"We, The People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

This is the grandest sentence ever yet inscribed in America, and perhaps the grandest of the past hundred years. It was the first full and explicit statement of the true object of government by the freely chosen delegates of a whole people; and it is as much in advance of the English "Magna Charta" as the nineteenth century is in advance of the thirteenth. Who was the author of it remains in doubt, but it is likely that a number of great minds were concerned in its composition. It was a general

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consensus of the best political opinion of the time, and marks an epoch in history like Abelard's teaching of reason and Luther's translation of the Bible. What might have been added to it, but which would not have been suited to the occasion, was, that without governmental oversight progress in civilization would not be possible.

So much having been conceded, I think it will be admitted that the true course by which to attain this end,—that is, the best possible government,—should not be an *a priori,* dogmatic, or empirical method, but by inductive reasoning and the practical adaptation of means to ends. This is the strong point made by Macaulay in his controversy with John Stuart Mill, who has the credit of introducing the inductive principle in logic, but who did not make use of it sufficiently in practice. Macaulay says:

"How, then, are we to arrive at just conclusions on a subject so important to the happiness of mankind? Surely by that method which, in every experimental science to which it has been applied, has signally increased the power and knowledge of our species; by that method for which our new philosophers would substitute quibbles scarcely worthy of the barbarous respondents and opponents of the Middle

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Ages; by the method of induction; by observing the present state of the world; by assiduously studying the history of past ages; by sifting the evidence of facts; by carefully combining and contrasting those which are authentic; by generalizing with judgment and diffidence; by perpetually bringing the theory which we have constructed to the test of new facts; by correcting or altogether abandoning it according as those new facts prove it to be partially or fundamentally unsound. Proceeding thus,—patiently, diligently, candidly,—we may hope to form a system as far inferior in pretension to that which we have been examining and as far superior to it in real utility as the prescriptions of a great physician, varying with every malady and with the constitution of every patient, to the pill of the advertising quack which is to cure all human beings, in all climates, of all diseases."

This is the Baconian method, and the method by which the English constitution, generally speaking, has been developed. Such principles also were in the minds of the framers of our national Constitution, but they found themselves obliged to compromise with existing local conditions as well as with the revolutionary spirit of the age. Their compromise on the slavery question—which ultimately resulted in the abolition of slavery—was not more a necessity of the times than that they should leave to

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the several States to determine the exact manner in which representatives to Congress should be elected. In many of the States there were restrictions on the right of suffrage which have since lapsed into abeyance; in others it was only qualified by age and sex. It cannot be doubted that Washington, Hamilton, and the Federalists generally would have preferred an educational suffrage, and perhaps also a small property qualification,—like the five-pound franchise in England; but any attempt to carry through such a measure would have been to risk the success of their enterprise. It is asserted by good historians that a large majority in the American Colonies were opposed to the formation of a strong central government, and it was only the authority of Washington and the arguments of Hamilton that persuaded them into it. The ratification of the Constitution was a close shave, and the absence of Jefferson at the court of France was a most fortunate omen for the future of America.

Another inherent weakness in the Constitution of the United States can be traced to the same source. It would have been most hazardous to have asserted the superiority of the federal government over the several State governments, as President Lincoln asserted it in

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1861; and the fiction of State sovereignty, which helped so much to encourage secession, lasted until that time. If civil war should arise in one of the States,—and a war of races is by no means improbable in some Southern States, —the President would have no constitutional right to suppress it unless called upon to do so by the governor of the State, who may have reasons for not doing so. In fact, an intermittent civil war, like that in the Middle Ages, now goes on in certain sections of the country, —notably in Kentucky,—where there are said to be more than a thousand manslayers still living; and this disorder, which is a disgrace to the whole nation, the federal government has no power to repress. Neither is it able to repress the Southern outrages to negroes or their lynching, which, even when well deserved, is contrary to the law of the land.

MODERN DEMOCRACY

Aristotle, in his "Politics," distinguishes six different forms of government, three of which he considers legitimate and the other three perversions and abnormal. His three legitimate forms are monarchy, aristocracy, and constitutional government; and the perversions of these are tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy.

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Thus we find the opposition already noticed between democracy and the Constitution predicated in Aristotle's theorem more than two thousand years ago, and it was this opposition which finally led to the War of Secession.* Dr. Francia's government of Paraguay was a modern instance of what the Greeks called tyranny; and the Tweed ring of New York City will suffice for a modern case of oligarchy; but of a pure democracy of the unrestricted government by the people there is only one conspicuous example in modern history,—between the imprisonment of Louis XVI. and the execution of Robespierre. The government of Athens during the fourth and fifth centuries B.C. was more democratic than that of any existing state or nation, and was quite as successful as any ancient government excepting the Roman; but it was not a case of pure democracy. It was limited in several ways by the constitution of Cleisthenes, and menial offices in Athens were almost entirely performed by slaves; so that portion of the population did not illustrate the principle that the right of government depends on the consent of the governed. Rome became a democ-

* See Von Holst's *Verfassung und Demokratie* in *V. S. Amerika.*

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racy in 60 B.C., only to become an imperialism fifteen years later.

The free cities of the Middle Ages have often been celebrated as the nurseries of modern civilization; and this is mainly true,—especially in regard to the arts and sciences,—but the monarchical courts were chiefly instrumental in developing courteous manners and a high standard of personal honor.* The institution of the Knights of the Garter should always be remembered in this connection. The free cities of Europe, however, were not properly democratic, but served to illustrate the true difference between democracy and republicanism. In many of them there was a titled nobility who served as military protectors. Generally the citizens were divided into guilds,—trades and professions,—to which even the nobility belonged; and it was only those that were incorporated in these guilds who could take part in municipal proceedings. This, of course, included a large majority of the inhabitants; but in order to belong to a guild a man was required to have a fairly good character and a definite occupation: that floating population which so often decides the re-

* See Guizot's "History of Civilization."

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sults of an election in modern cities was excluded from it. In Florence, which may be termed the centre of mediæval culture, no person was allowed to vote for chief magistrate who had not attained the age of thirty; and similar restrictions prevailed in many other cities. There were no free cities in Great Britain, but the charters of London, Oxford, Edinburgh, and other large places gave them an independence nearly equal to that of Bruges and Nuremberg. It was from this English municipal freedom that the republicanism of the American Colonies was originally derived.

When the free cities of Italy, France, and Spain lost their independence through the centralizing tendencies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, civilization in those countries steadily declined, and this decline was not arrested until the revolution of 1789 startled the upper classes into a new sense of their responsibility to society as a whole.

What we now call democracy was unknown in the eighteenth century except to the philosophers and historians. It was natural that the early settlements of America should have a democratic character, because the hardships of pioneer life place all persons very nearly on the

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same level. The New England town-meeting resembled the Roman comitia, and like that was composed of attendants who were both farmers and soldiers.* Such was the original basis of our government. As towns grew up into cities, the English municipal system was adopted, and the general court of legislation was modelled on the English House of Commons. Class differences sprang up with the development of mercantile and professional life. Servants no longer ate at the same tables as their employers; and a natural aristocracy arose, which was everywhere respected. In the country village the justice of the peace or esquire ruled with a patriarchal sway; as did the village clergyman within the precincts of the church. It was this healthy and unconventional social order which produced the great leaders in the War of Independence, who in style and character, at least, were superior to the leaders in our Civil War.

It was impossible, however, for American life to remain independent of European influences. Society in Europe was verging towards a fall, and the narrow mediæval basis could not sustain its elaborate modern superstructure

* Indian fighters, at least.

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any longer. Locke may not have perceived this, but the spirit of the age was in him, and he represented the most advanced thought of his time. Every great philosopher bears a definite relation to the age in which he lives. Plato taught self-examination, which was the first step to a higher morality; Aristotle taught mental analysis, which is the first step in the investigation of external nature. In an epoch of general unbelief Kant restored the faith of his countrymen in God and immortality by his "Critique of Pure Reason." Locke's specialty, as is well known, was the understanding, or what is called common sense, as against custom and tradition. By limiting his philosophy to this he made it more effective,—for it was just what the world needed. It was essentially a puritan philosophy and readily accepted by enterprising scholars in America like Franklin and Jefferson; but in France it was caught up by a host of amateur cosmopolitan writers, who were neither statesmen nor had ever made a serious study of the subject. Chief among these was Rousseau, whose "Social Compact" became popular from the clearness of its style and the celebrity of its author as a writer of fiction. The social compact which Rousseau imagined between the government and the

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governed had never taken place in France, and the first sentence of his book is a case of erroneous logic, but it answered its purpose and became a revolutionary gospel to the French people. It was from these two sources, but especially from Locke, that Jefferson drew the material for his political writings, so that even a close resemblance is apparent between many of his sentences and those of his predecessors.

Locke discovers the foundation of all political rights in a primitive state of society where all persons are on a basis of absolute equality. In his treatise on civil government he says:

"To understand political power aright and derive it from its original, we must consider what estate all men are naturally in, and that is, a state of perfect freedom to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of Nature, without asking leave or depending upon the will of any other man.

"A state also of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another; there being nothing more evident than that creatures of the same species and rank, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of Nature, and the use of the same faculties should also be equal one amongst another, etc." *

* Book II., chap. ii.

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This is not profoundly convincing to the modern investigator, and seems barely more rational than the theory of Locke's opponent, the "learned Sir Robert Filmer," who based the divine rights of kings on the authority of Adam over Cain and Abel. It is, in fact, like attempting to build a mountain out of pebbles on the seashore; but the truth is that in those times, 1650 to 1700, philosophers did not possess the material for speculations in this line. Their knowledge of antiquity was limited to Herodotus, and their information concerning barbarous races to the extravagant tales of sea captains. We can safely presume now that no such state of society as Locke imagines ever existed; and, in fact, he contradicts his own hypothesis in a manner, as is evident from his conclusion of the statement above quoted:

> " . . . there being nothing more evident than that creatures of the same species and rank should also be equal one amongst another, without subordination or subjection, unless the lord and master of them all should, by any manifest declaration of his will, set one above another, and confer on him, by an evident and clear appointment, an undoubted right to dominion and sovereignty."

The deeper we dive into the recesses of history and the more accurate our knowledge of

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the aborigines in Africa, America, and Polynesia, the plainer and clearer it appears that in the most primitive forms of society *might* was essentially *right,* and that even in the more favored races, like the Semitic and Aryan, the earliest governments are the most arbitrary and despotic. Among the American Indians, when the chief dies or becomes superannuated, it is the greatest bully, the brave who combines domineering qualities in the highest degree, who succeeds to his position; and Homer has given a vivid picture of the truculent, bloody manner in which Ulysses regained the authority which had lapsed by his long absence from Ithaca. All the evidence we have tends to show that ideas of right and justice were developed slowly and gradually. "History," says Hegel, "is the evolution of human freedom;" and if we may presume that government becomes more just, enlightened, and humane with the progress of civilization the converse of this must also be true. The British empire is an improvement on the Roman, the Roman on the Babylonian, and so on in a descending series.

This is according to Darwinian evolution, and if we are to believe in Darwinism it is easy to imagine a prehistoric condition of the

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human race, in which they herded together like deer in the woods and enjoyed the equality of gregarious animals. This is a natural induction, and significant to us because it suggests that even the attempt of social theorists to reduce society to a dead level has an injurious moral effect. Go to Chicago, Paris, or Berlin, and you will find almost invariably that the socialistic agitators are bad workmen and idle, dissipated fellows. They have no idea of "plain living and high thinking," but wish to acquire the power of which they seek to deprive others. The differentiation of classes begins with civilization, and although it frequently happens that this does injustice, for the advantages of wealth and culture often fall to those who do not deserve them, it is the struggle against this injustice which makes the poetry of life and stimulates character. It is inequality which makes life interesting; but the socialistic Garden of Eden would be stale, flat, and uninspiring. Socialism, moreover, would place all honest and industrious persons at the mercy of the idle and vicious.

Locke says again (Chapter IV.):

"The natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will

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or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of Nature for his rule."

This is certainly more Utopian than rational; and yet the Law of Nature, as it has been called, has exercised a tremendous influence on the destinies of mankind. It has served as the watchword of five revolutions in America and more than twice as many in Europe. It has never been accepted as a *legal* principle in England and the United States, but it forms a large ingredient in the Code Napoleon, which has become the law for all the Latin races. It influenced the philosophy of Emerson as much as the politics of Jefferson; and the scepticism of the eighteenth century was quite as much due to Locke as to Hume. As a reactionary principle against the hardened conventionalism of European classes it has had great value, and still continues to be useful; but in America it overturned the healthy, sensible order of society, and has caused a great deal of mischief. It is a principle of disintegration, and no enduring structure can be founded on it. Webster stated the case more clearly and simply in his reply to Hayne.

"When a government becomes intolerable, revolution is in order."

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THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

Rousseau says at the outset: "Man is born free, and yet is universally enslaved," which is rather a rash statement, for children can hardly be called free until they become of age, and at that time a large proportion of the French peasantry were independent landowners.

Jefferson was more prudent when he wrote:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

I have no intention to disparage this noble declaration; it served to weld together the sympathies of a widely scattered population, and to unite millions in a common cause, but we should also consider its original purpose. The Declaration of Independence is a *revolutionary document,* and if accepted otherwise it will continue to create revolutions long after they are necessary for the public good. There can be nothing worse for a state than the revolutionary habit,—as in Rome during the life of Cicero, and in the Spanish-American republics.

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Jefferson himself was a revolutionary character. He wished to change and remodel everything, but his changes were not always improvements. He wrote his letters in a different fashion from other people, and one which has never been adopted. He invented a serpentine form of fence which was supposed to economize material, but this advantage was more than balanced by the waste of time and space. Still more characteristic was the fire-tongs he had made after the fashion of sugar-tongs, because he considered the common form too complicated. He objected to the building of forts for the protection of our seaports, because he considered them part of the machinery of despotism. He was opposed to the federal constitution, and, if he had not been in France at that time, would probably have prevented its adoption. He encouraged rebellion against the national government and sowed the seeds of secession.

Jefferson's declaration of rights has been condensed by common parlance to the expression "all men are created free and equal;" a formula the value of which depends on the meaning we attach to the words "free and equal." The freedom of the savage who forces his will upon others without considera-

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tion—and this is the true test of a barbarous nature—is a worse condition than African slavery. The way in which democratic politicians usually explain the phrase is that every man has a right to do as he pleases so long as he does not interfere with the rights of other men. This would seem to be fair, and yet it is not sufficiently disinterested. Something must be sacrificed for the welfare of the community as a whole, and the mere payment of taxes is not sufficient for this. A state founded on this principle would be merely an aggregate of individuals with a constant tendency to separation and isolation. It might finally become a sort of Chinese republic in which there would be neither art, science, nor progress. The Greek myth that the walls of Thebes were built to music from Apollo's lyre has a fine significance. It is only through a self-forgetful harmony that great deeds are accomplished and nations grow to greatness. It is in the subordination of the individual to the state, and to the common good, that men achieve the highest distinction.

Sumner said in the Senate, "The service of God is perfect freedom;" and it is true that we can only attain a high degree of freedom through submission to universal law. In the

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first place, there are the laws of the land, which every one is bound to obey; then there is the unwritten code of honor, which subsists between all gentlemen and self-respecting persons; then there is the etiquette of domestic life, by which alone society can be made harmonious and agreeable; and, finally, we have our consciences to contend with, and the problems it presents to us are often perplexing enough. It is only after a man has mastered these various rules, and learned them by heart as it were, so that they become a second nature to him, that in a higher sense he can properly be called free. Otherwise he will be continually stumbling into pitfalls and running up against wire fences; and it will be seen from this that a man's objective or external freedom is in an inverse ratio to his internal or spiritual freedom. Now this internal freedom constitutes what we call happiness. Socrates in his prison-cell was more free than his accusers in the court of the Areopagus.

Is not political liberty, however, negative rather than positive? The right of suffrage, of habeas corpus, and of changing government officers is positive; but, on the whole, political liberty consists in not being interfered with by government in an arbitrary or unreasonable

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manner. The influence which each one of us exercises in our right of suffrage is small, but the power of the most liberal government that can be imagined is always great. *Coercion is inseparable from any form of government;* and those who are coerced are most likely to feel that they have been tyrannized over. Jefferson himself was the nearest approach to a tyrant of any of our presidents. His embargo law was directed not more against the British than against the interests of New England, which was the centre of opposition to him; and it was much more successful in the latter case than in the former. As Webster said, "thousands of families were reduced from affluence to poverty" by that law. The nullifiers of South Carolina looked upon President Jackson as a tyrant, and the free-state settlers in Kansas held the same opinion of President Pierce. The thousand and one persons who were arrested and imprisoned by Seward, between 1861 and 1865, for expressing disloyal sentiments, certainly did not exemplify the natural right to liberty. The thousands of drafted men in our Civil War could hardly be said to have possessed a right to their own lives, and their pursuit of the enemy could not certainly be called the pursuit of happiness. No doubt

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Wilkes Booth considered himself the peer of William Tell, and that President Lincoln was one of the worst of tyrants, instead of a just and magnanimous ruler. Such is not the ordinary course of affairs; but these instances show that political freedom is not absolute but relative, and depends as much on wise and just administration as on public safeguards.*

If all men are born equal, it is natural to conclude that they should remain equal. This conclusion emphasizes the brotherhood of man in an unmistakable manner, and was very popular with politicians of both parties until the slavery conflict appeared on the horizon like a black tornado. The test came when the conclusion was applied to negroes; but the anti-slavery reformers eagerly caught it up and supported it by Jefferson's famous declaration that there was no attribute of God that would take part with the master against his slaves. "Glittering generalities," cried Rufus Choate, sarcastically; but Abraham Lincoln told the exact truth when he said in the Douglas and Lincoln debates:

"I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men; but they did not intend to

* Appendix A.

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declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral development, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal with 'certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' This they said, and this they meant. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth that all were then actually enjoying that equality, nor yet that they were about to confer it immediately upon them. In fact, they had no power to confer such a boon."

The fact is that all men are equal in a spiritual, but not in a material, sense. We are all equal before God, within the pale of the church, and before the tribunal of justice; but in a material sense there is great inequality, owing partly to fortune and partly to the character of the individual. To assert the practical equality of all human beings is to overthrow society in a single sentence. Wherever civilization is developed class differences arise, and the attempt to prevent these differences is like trying to dam the Mississippi.* The refusal to recognize the existence of classes is in itself demoralizing, for it separates us from reality and encourages delusion. It is the feminine

* Appendix B.

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element which democratic theorists leave out of their account. They write as if the world was composed wholly of the male sex. Women are properly more refined and sensitive than men, and this refinement and delicacy are essential to the progress of civilization. The home culture is, if anything, more important than school-training, and home culture can only be attained by a process of natural selection. *"Odi profanum vulgus"* is the motto of every respectable mother. If her children associate with bad companions, all her care, teaching, and solicitude will be frustrated. For the children of poor, but cultivated, parents to go to a public school and consort with rude and vicious boys is a positive misfortune. To obviate this is the chief advantage of wealth, and renders a mild kind of aristocracy inevitable and justifiable. In the high-toned socialistic experiment of Brook Farm the mothers did not object so much to a common table as they did to a common nursery. Women are aristocrats by instinct.

John Stuart Mill recognized the importance of the feminine influence in politics, but he misapprehended the right application of it. His mixed government of men and women would deteriorate both sexes. In Sparta the

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women voted, and ate at a common table; but Plato informs us in his "Laws" that they were the coarsest and most immoral in ancient Greece.

Distinctions of classes will do no harm so long as they are not sharply defined. The great advantage in American life is that we have no titled nobility. Our millionaires and United States Senators wield an influence equal to that of an English duke or a German prince,—the influence always being largely due to the ability of the person; but there are no conventional barriers between them and other gentlemen. Neither do we suffer from a narrow etiquette which prevents an English barrister from dancing with the daughter of an attorney. Nor are we obliged to stultify ourselves by addressing an honest tradesman without the prefix of Mister. There are two classes in America, the farmers and mechanics, who are greatly deserving of respect, because they are themselves self-respecting and do not pretend to be more or less than they really are. The farmer is justly proud of his well-kept acres; and the artisan of his skill, which much surpasses that of the accountant and city salesman.

Emerson said: "The best society is accused

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of exclusiveness because it is the society which every one wishes to enter," but the question might be pertinently asked, In what does the best society consist? Some prefer fashionable society, and others the less conventional society, which immediately surrounds it. As a rule, the society which thinks itself the best is not quite the best. Would not the proper question for every man and woman be, What is the best society for me? Where is the society in which I can move freely and happily? This will generally solve the problem without any very desperate effort. An aggressive democracy pushing itself forward to obtain the front seats is naturally rebuffed by fashionable society, which it wishes to enter more from idle curiosity than from the desire to be helpful. A rebuff of this kind, which is as disagreeable to the giver as to the recipient, is easily mistaken for snobbishness, although that is rather the mark of a *parvenu*. Intrusive persons are quite as likely to be snubbed in a tenement as in a palace. It is perfectly true that there is much snobbishness in American cities, and this is greatly to be regretted; but democrats make snobs, and snobs make socialists in an endless and vicious circle.

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THE JUSTIFICATION OF GOVERNMENT

The doctrine that the justification of government depends on the consent of the governed is also revolutionary, for on this principle any form of government might be changed or overthrown at a moment's notice. Governments of cities may have been established in this manner, but no stable national government ever has been—or is likely to be—until the human race is much wiser than at present.

The proposition reduced to its lowest terms is an absurdity. We hear nothing of the rights of minorities in this dictum, and the coercion of even a small percentage of the population is as vicious in theory as the coercion of the whole. To steal a hundred dollars may not be as bad as stealing ten thousand, but it is nevertheless a penitentiary offence. Let us suppose, however, that the phrase is intended to mean no more than a substantial majority, what instance of this can be discovered in the world's history?

National governments are of comparatively recent origin, so that we are able to study them in all the details of their formation. I think no one will deny that the present British gov-

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ernment was established by force; but within the last half-century we have seen national governments established in Italy and Germany by the use of force; and the use of force would seem to have been unavoidable, although it cannot be doubted that a majority in both countries are favorable to some form of national unity. When a republican government was established in France in 1871, it was generally believed that peace and happiness had at last been restored to that distracted country; but on that instant a bloody rebellion arose which was only quelled with great difficulty.

The United States of America has proved no exception to the general rule. Nobody pretends that the constitution of 1787 was willingly adopted by the people of this country. A large majority was opposed to it; and it was openly asked why did we go to war with England if we are to be tyrannized over by a government of our own? It was the soldiers of the revolution (who had learned the blessings of order and discipline) that carried the measure through. They said to the reluctant masses, " Vote for the Constitution, or may the devil take you;" and the people were practically dragooned into its adoption by the frowning looks of men who had faced death on the

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battle-field. Senator Lodge says in his "Life of Hamilton:"

"In the country at large, and in the most of the States, there was a majority against the Constitution, but there it was before them, and the people had to make their choice between that and anarchy. They did not see the alternative quite as plainly as we do now, but that they felt it is shown by the fact that, while a large majority longed to say 'No,' a very narrow majority in eleven States did say 'Yes.'" *

It was only the preceding war and "the spirit of seventy-six" which made our national government possible.

Locke's theory of proprietary rights in land as depending originally on its cultivation has found its justification in the methods of our western settlers; but it could not apply to the possession of land in Europe, where repeated conquests and royal grants have wholly effaced the rights of original proprietors. Savigny, following the more scientific method of historical investigation, finds that the right to property has been practically developed through three successive stages: primarily, *possession;* secondly, adverse possession, or possession against all comers; and, finally,

* "Life of Hamilton," p. 64.

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possession ripened by a prescription of time. I believe this opinion is now universally accepted; and the western custom of jumping a ranch is an illustration of it. There is a close analogy between this and the successive stages in the formation of government. First comes organization; then the exercise of authority without internal opposition; finally, the recognition by other governments of this authority. Governments have been founded in a day and have disappeared the next. The French Directory lasted seven years and was dissipated like vapor in a moment. Napoleon's government endured the severest shocks, but fell at last from a lack of recognition by the great powers. The government that is to endure for centuries must sustain severe shocks both internally and externally.

The United States of America has proved a conspicuous example of this. Only five years after the Constitution had been adopted came the Whiskey Rebellion in Pennsylvania. Then the authority of the national government was disputed by the legislators of Kentucky and Virginia in resolutions which emanated from Jefferson himself. These resolutions were intended to nullify laws passed by Congress for the repression of seditious disturbances,—as

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if the existence of a government did not include the right to preserve law and order. It was an assertion of the preamble of the Declaration of Independence as against the preamble of the Constitution. It was the first germ of the doctrine of the State sovereignty which finally culminated in the Civil War. The circuitous language and anonymous authorship of these resolutions are characteristic of intrigue and rebellion, and Jefferson appropriately became the direct instigator of warfare on both sides of the line. The slaveholders seem to have felt an instinctive fear of what the national government might do in the way of coercion.

Next came murmurs of discontent from New England, but not from persons of authority or distinction. Then came Aaron Burr's scheme of disintegration, which failed as all such enterprises must when not supported by popular approval, and after this the Connecticut convention which threatened secession on account of Jefferson's embargo. The War of 1812 put an end for a time to these centrifugal tendencies, and effected much good by consolidating the young republic and exciting a spirit of true nationality; but it was not long before the conflict commenced between slave

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and free labor. By the Missouri Compromise the slave-holding faction obtained an advantage which finally proved their ruin; for slave labor kills free labor wherever it comes in contact with it, and this fact was more potent in consolidating the anti-slavery sentiment of the Northern States than the most fervid speeches of the Abolitionists. A long-continued contest for supremacy in the national government resulted at length in a fiercely contested war, in which both parties honestly believed that they were fighting for freedom. However, in spite of Gladstone's eulogy of Jefferson Davis in the House of Commons, the civilized world has condemned the attempt to found a nation on the corner-stone of human slavery.

In 1865 the United States were reunited by *force,* and who will venture to predict when the authority of our government will again be disputed? No rule can be laid down for the justification of revolutions. It is always a matter of judgment, like building a house, and the right or wrong of it must always depend upon circumstances.

Carlyle, who proved a true prophet in regard to negro suffrage, says in his life of Frederick II., " A people can only become a nation after passing through the baptism of fire;" and this

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is a grand historical idea, true either deductively or inductively, for it is only by great sacrifices and heroic deeds that an abiding sense of patriotism can be engendered, and a just pride of nationality handed down like a legacy from one generation to another.

THE FOUNDATION OF POLITICS

The true justification of government resides in its *moral necessity*. This is so obvious that we have only to think of it to recognize it. If only one person on earth desired government, he would still have a right to it, even though all others were opposed to him. This, of course, is not now a supposable case, for even among the cannibals there are chieftains who exercise a rude kind of authority; but it proves the principle, and the fact remains that all new governments have been formed by a determined minority, who enforced their plans on a weak and vacillating majority. Nor is this to be wondered at, for among large masses of people occupying a wide area there will always be so many conflicting interests and differences of opinion that they can only become united through the influence of governmental persuasion. When, however, they have experienced the advantage of national unity, they

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are always ready to take up arms in its defence.

The mistake that Locke and other philosophers have made is in supposing that certain favored races, the Aryan and Semitic, have always been civilized. Two thousand years ago the Saxons were a barbarous people as compared with the Greeks and Romans; what were they like two thousand years before that? Instead of Locke's prehistoric condition of human blessedness, let us imagine a primitive state of society in which there was neither law nor custom, and the only language consisted of a few nouns and verbs. In such a community misunderstandings would be perpetual and the struggle for sustenance would often result in bloodshed. Then some primeval Moses, a natural law-giver, would arise and, with the help of his sons, preserve order for a time; but eventually he would be overpowered and slain. After him others would arise from time to time, who would also meet the usual fate of the world's benefactors; but at length the community would find out the advantage of having some kind of a regulator and improvise a rude way of selecting one.

Such speculations are of no great value, but the foregoing is at least more reasonable than

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Locke's theory, and probably antedates the supposed evolution of government from the paternal authority; for strong ties of kindred indicate an advanced stage of moral culture, as among the Arab tribes and the Germans of Tacitus.* With most savage races the ties of family come to an end when physical assistance is no longer necessary. You will notice, also, that in our public schools the boys who take the lead are more often self-appointed than suggested or chosen by their companions.

If we look at government as a moral necessity all history becomes intelligible; whereas otherwise it would seem as if the human race—at the present time—had just escaped from bondage,—not much of a compliment, either. If the question is raised, Does not this justify military despotism or any absolute form of government? I answer, it certainly does where despotism is the only form attainable. It has been said that in the long run a nation will have the kind of government it deserves, and in a general way this is true enough. The despotisms of Morocco and Siam are justified because the Moors and Siamese cannot be made

* It is probable enough that the Germanic form of government originated in this manner.

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to understand the difference between abstract right and personal interest; but that Christian Greeks should be governed by Turks is a great misfortune, for they deserve much better treatment. So also the Russians may be said to deserve better government than that which they now endure. Nations, like individuals, are sometimes the victims of circumstances. The Servians and Bulgarians have only lately escaped from a piratical tyranny which lasted for more than four centuries.

Who can doubt that the government of Solomon and the Maccabees was justifiable? The Jews are to-day monarchical, and they seemed never to understand that the kingdom which Christ prophesied for them was not of this earth. The Roman Empire was the inevitable consequence of a mercenary plutocracy which had already robbed the Romans of their liberty and was plundering all the nations of the earth. Besides this, it is supposed to have been justified—and with good reason—by the consistent development of the Roman law, which certainly could not have taken place under the dominion of the lawless Roman Senate. The five good Emperors would seem to have been sent by Divine Providence for this purpose—as Hamilton was sent to the American Colonies.

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We can only say of past ages that certain institutions were good in their time. How much better they might have been we cannot tell. Gibbon thinks that the fall of the Roman Empire was owing to Christianity. Mommsen thinks it was the prevalence of slave labor, which seems much more probable. The feudal system, which arose after the death of Charlemagne and has still left its impress on the Europe of to-day, is still more of a puzzle. But an institution so universal would seem necessarily to have originated in the vital requirements of that peculiar age. It was a fine school of discipline for heroic virtues and produced some of the grandest characters in history. There is also a tenderness of feeling and depth of sympathy in the old English ballads and the poetry of the Minnesingers that we do not always find in the poets of our own time.

Napoleon said of Spain that if it were well governed it would soon be the rival of France; and the loss of Cuba may be considered much less of a misfortune to the Spanish people than the suppression of their constitution by the Emperor Charles V. The tendency to centralization in the sixteenth century brought with it an irresponsible form of monarchy, which caused great mischief, and from which Eng-

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land alone was preserved by the brief dictatorship of Cromwell—equally irresponsible, but in the right direction. The aristocratic republics of Holland and Venice were at the close of the eighteenth century in a political condition not much better than that of France and Spain. Pichegru was welcomed by the Dutch middle classes as a deliverer, and after the annexation of Venice to Austria the city soon doubled its numbers.

The conquest of Gaul and Britain by the Romans was justified by their putting a stop to the human sacrifices of the Druids, and the English occupation of India may be justified in the same manner. Gangooli, a Brahman who was converted to Christianity and came to America, when he was commiserated on the servitude of his countrymen, replied that on the whole the British government of India had been of great advantage to them.

This is not an argument for monarchy or aristocracy or any form of foreign conquest, but is simply intended to show that different institutions are suited to different times and races. A republic like that of the United States would have been as irrelevant in the twelfth century as baronial castles would be upon American hills.

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"Political theories," said Bismarck, "either lead to dogmatism or to those illusions which blind men to facts." One evident cause of Bismarck's prolonged success is that he never was troubled with theories of any kind. How little men care for these so-called principles of politics was exemplified in the recent war with Spain. The *Maine* outrage precipitated that war, but the American people went into it in the spirit of a crusade. They believed that wrong had been done and that the oppressed were to be liberated; but as soon as this was accomplished, the United States government annexed Porto Rico and the Philippine Islands without consulting the wishes of the inhabitants or of its own subjects. This was exercising the right of conquest as Bismarck exercised it in 1870, for which he was severely reprobated by American newspapers, and with less excuse, for he only reannexed provinces that had formerly belonged to Germany, and the agitation against it was mainly inspired by the emissaries of Pius IX. When Senator Hoar raised his voice to warn the American people that they were acting contrary to their professed principles and establishing a dangerous precedent, he found few indeed to support him. He was denounced for insubordination to his party, and

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this implied a denial of the right of free speech. It would seem that the principles of the Declaration of Independence were intended to apply to Americans, but not to other races. The truth, is, however, that these principles are not eternal and immutable, like the Golden Rule and the Ten Commandments. They belong to a period of our history from which we are rapidly receding.*

The rights of human beings are best defined in the common law and the statutes, and it requires no slight study to obtain a knowledge of them. Their boundaries are indefinable and must always remain so; but the first of all rights is the right to good government. If a man has a right to anything it is this,—to being governed wisely and justly. All history has been an effort to obtain this right, and it is yet unattained. To construct a government which shall be strong without being tyrannical, which shall advance the interests of its own people without detriment to other nations, which acts with sufficient unity of purpose without interfering too much with local institutions and customs, and which shall be at once conservative and progressive,—such is always the endeavor

* Appendix C.

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of the constructive statesman. The democratic principle, however, interferes with this endeavor, for it inculcates the notion that the less a people is governed the better. Its tendency is to weaken authority, to prevent unity of action, to be wasteful in small affairs, and to be economical in large enterprises. Its disrespect for history undermines conservatism, and its lack of definite aims interferes with progress. The democratic ship of state, instead of being navigated in a rational manner, is permitted to drift with the current until it becomes grounded on political shallows. Such was the course in the long period of democratic ascendency from Jefferson to Buchanan, and such will probably be the course of the present French Republic.

A nation may easily be governed too little as well as too much. The president of Harvard University, in his excellent letter previous to the last election, referred to the strong American love of liberty, and afterwards complained that our country suffered from too many lynchings, shooting affrays, and other riotous disturbances. No wonder that he thought so, when it is rarely possible to take up an American newspaper without being confronted with the account of a murder or a lynching. Few innocent persons may have suffered, and the ma-

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jority no doubt deserved their fate; but a large proportion, especially negroes, have been treated more severely than any court of justice authorized legally would have punished them.

Not long since a Mississippi clergyman shot three of his townsmen in rapid succession in the public square. A report of the proceeding stated that the reverend gentleman emptied the chambers of his revolver, and then watched the writhing of his victims until he was arrested and placed in jail to protect him from mob violence. His subsequent fate I never learned, but it is not likely that he suffered from process of law. In another southwestern town two populous families carried on a feud until all but three of the male members were destroyed. The head man of one faction was shot from a window in a most cowardly manner while he was walking to church with his wife. Such actions remind one of the lawless deeds of the Scotch border during the Middle Ages; but they did not take place on the frontiers, but in well and long settled communities.

The last of November, 1903, a school-mistress in Charlestown, Indiana, was mobbed by her scholars and taken to a frozen pond, where she was immersed in cold water up to her neck for nearly an hour; a treatment which brought

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on a fever, and at last accounts she was lying in a critical condition. During the past ten years more than two thousand persons have been put to death by lynching in the United States; and an appeal made by the Methodist clergy of Chicago to President McKinley to take action in regard to this enormity produced no effect, for the President is as practically as powerless in such a matter as any private citizen. Read the daily page of crime in the New York *Herald,* and reflect on the fact that there is no country in Europe, except Turkey, where the like would be possible.

Lynchings have not only been committed for murder, arson, and rapine, but for the smaller crimes of larceny, rioting, and barn-burning, and other offences, which legally would only be punished by imprisonment. The moral effect of lynching is exactly the opposite of punishment inflicted according to law. There have been instances in which no better justice could be obtained, but as a rule it stimulates recklessness of conduct and incites to acts of violence and bloodshed. To permit boys, and even women, to look upon the infliction of capital punishment is in itself the depth of depravity. Senator Hoar, in an address to the Legislature of Massachusetts, referred to the fact that a

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hundred years ago a case of murder caused a six weeks' sensation, while now it is so common that if one takes place in the next street to us it hardly attracts attention. He called this a dark picture. It is as dark as the midnight before a storm. Much of this is due, no doubt, to the inefficiency of local police, and much to the difficulty of persuading juries to agree in regard to capital offences; many culprits escape arrest, and many escape conviction who deserve to be hanged; but is it not also largely due to the sentiment of revolutionary freedom? Does not this inculcate a spirit of insubordination, a tendency to break through all conventional bonds and civil restraints? Does it not cultivate an abnormal self-conceit, like that of the Colorado hotel waiter who shot a guest at the breakfast-table for treating him in a disrespectful manner? Why should there be more desperadoes in New England and the Middle States than are to be found in England, France, or Germany? In a country like Ireland, where the laboring class is always on the verge of starvation, necessity engenders desperate proceedings; but in the United States there is no class of persons to whom this rule applies, and among our criminals there is a large proportion of native-born Anglo-Saxons.

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It is true that the riffraff of Europe have been emigrating to America for the past hundred years, and there has been some pretty dangerous material in it; but the German anarchists who fought the Chicago police with dynamite did not apparently think of this in their own country. If all government were to be suddenly removed, would not crime and misdemeanor, if punished at all, be punished by impromptu courts of justice, that is, by lynching?

If Hamilton's plan, to have the governors of the States appointed by the President, had been adopted by the convention of 1787, this condition of affairs would hardly have been possible. It is the necessity of popular support which weakens the executive in States like Georgia and Kentucky, and when public sentiment countenances the practice of shooting at sight, the executive authority will rarely be able to oppose it successfully. The governors of the States would be far more independent if they derived their authority from the central power instead of from their own citizens, and their administration would have a more uniform and national character. Such a change could be effected now only by a violent revolution, but Congress might easily enact a sedition law which would enable the President " to

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preserve domestic tranquillity" and to transfer criminal cases to United States courts if considered essential to the ends of justice. The least Congress could do would be to pass general laws against the burning of negroes and the practice of shooting at sight. Let us live in a Christian country.

France is a nation with a more democratic government than our own, and yet every Frenchman lives under a network of regulations which to Americans might seem intolerable. And the reason of this is partly owing to their highly centralized administration, and partly to the fact that a good many laws of the second empire which have been found salutary still remain in force. Every Frenchman is obliged to become a soldier at the age of eighteen for two years, and most Frenchmen are ready to admit the moral and physical advantages of that early training. No building can be erected in a French city without the approval of a government commission, and this is no idle formality. Edifices that are not suitable and harmonious to their surroundings are carefully excluded, and it is for this reason that Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles are so much more elegant than any English or American cities. If slight injustice is sometimes done in this way,

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it is nothing to the injustice to the whole public which is caused by the erection of monstrous grotesque or ill-assorted buildings in our large centres. The solecism in the English law that the owner of ground owns up to the sky was invented before elevators were thought of, and consequently no provision was made against the construction of very high buildings. Portions of New York City are still fine-looking, but, as a whole, it wears the trade-mark of an unregulated commercial greed.

EXISTING EVILS

At the time of our great Centennial the London *Times* said, "Editorially we cannot congratulate ourselves that so corrupt a government as that of the United States exists upon the earth." The United States of America is not responsible for forcing opium upon the Chinese, nor for supporting the Turks in their devastation of Christian provinces, nor for *enjoying* the extravagant luxury of suppressing a Dutch republic in Africa; but in the year 1876 it is not so surprising that the *Times* should have made this statement.

The true history of that period will probably never be published in America. One after another of the highest officials in Washington

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were exposed for malfeasance or peculation and retired in disgrace to private life. Had they received their deserts, they would all have gone to prison. In republican Rome they would have been put to death. Burglars were hired to steal state documents which compromised persons in high position. It seemed as if the only honest person in the government was the President himself, who was, however, wholly oblivious in regard to the character of his associates.

This was, however, a transient phase—a recoil of the cannon. Nothing is so damaging to a political party as direct peculation from the public treasure, and with a succession of Presidents who have recognized this fact and honorable representatives at foreign courts, the government of the United States stands before the world in as fair a light as the British government or any other. The evils which now assail it are more insidious, deep-seated, dangerous, and difficult to deal with.

It has often been remarked that the purest as well as most dignified period of American politics came to an end with the administration of John Quincy Adams. Jackson introduced the party spoils system, and if he had wholly usurped the sovereignty he would probably

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have caused less mischief. It was organized Jacobinism,—what Hamilton had feared and predicted and tried to avert,—but the anti-slavery conflict soon overshadowed Jackson's innovation and elevated politics as long as this conflict lasted. The period from 1850 to 1870 was one of the grand epochs of history.

After the Civil War the "spoils of office" again raised its ugly head in conjunction with a new and formidable ally; and this ally soon became known as the "boss system" in politics. This was a natural consequence of choosing a military President. Lincoln had been many years in political life before he was elected, and was well acquainted with leading public men in the different States. He was therefore well qualified to select his own appointees with a fair knowledge of their ability and character; but Grant was unacquainted with these men, even by name, and the only course open to him was to trust to the judgment of others, and with a very weak Cabinet this finally resulted in turning over the appointments to the leading Senators, who thus acquired a great increase of power, and this power they have never been willing to surrender.*

* In justice to Grant it should always be remembered that his firmness saved the country from an inflated currency, and that

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As much as the Senate gained in this manner, just so much was lost to the House of Representatives. Members of Congress were now obliged to solicit favors for their friends from the senators of their respective States, and a form of military subordination was fostered in the government wholly at variance with republican institutions. About the same time the popular branch of Congress surrendered nearly all the authority that was left to it by gradual changes in its rules of procedure which left it entirely at the mercy of its own speaker.* This was done by a strong party majority for the purpose of expediting public business, but the promoters of the changes could not have realized their ultimate consequences. The tendency to imperialism in democracy has become a truism among historians.

The strength of this movement may be judged from the fact that the American people were powerless to prevent it. Sumner was the first to attack it, and burned out the embers of his life in his last act of patriotic devotion.

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he maintained law and order in the Southern States when it was most difficult to do so.

* Written on Lincoln's birthday, and the same day Representative McCall delivered a telling speech in the House against the encroachments of the Senate.

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When the general public recognized what was taking place, the indignation was well-nigh universal, and the administration met with a crushing defeat at the polls in 1874; but the "boss system" still held its ground. A reform president was elected in 1876, but with a hostile majority in the Senate he was able to accomplish little. His strong effort for civil service reform was not sustained by the public. All the world knows the fate of his successor.

If the "boss system" is not to be held responsible for Garfield's death, it can certainly be laid to the account of the spoils system. After his assassination and the election of Cleveland, the autocratic bosses disappeared; but the dragon's teeth were sown, and a substitute for the boss system soon appeared in both parties,—what is now known as the "political machine."

Change is the universal law. Call a government what you will, and no sooner does it come into operation than the tendency to change becomes apparent. Some kind of organization is always necessary for a political party, and there had always been more or less of it, but not until lately has it reached the condition of a perfect organization. In all the larger and more important States, excepting perhaps

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Massachusetts, there now exists a half-concealed organization subordinated like a grand army, which has for its object, primarily, the success of its party at all cost and hazard, and, secondly, an equitable division of the spoils among its members. All persons of public importance are obliged to find their places in this organization, whether they approve of it or not; and he who opposes it or even hesitates to obey its mandates is expelled from the fold and finds the doors of political life are closed to him for the future. Strong men, like Roosevelt, occasionally break through this by a *tour de force,* but such is the general rule. The one virtue it respects is uniformity; the one vice it abhors is independence. It pre-arranges and regulates all political meetings from the primary caucuses to the great national conventions; and, finally, the American people are called in at the last moment to vote for candidates whom they have never nominated and for measures which perhaps are not intended to become laws.

That an appreciable residuum of political power still appertains to the people of the United States is certain; but it is equally certain that this residuum is steadily diminishing. Democracies, as history has proved, are much

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more practicable on a small scale than on a large one; and the more unwieldy the population of this country becomes, the stronger will be the tendency to centralization and the one-man power. Meanwhile we are being hocussed by formulas and fine phrases, and the men who do this believe in all sincerity that they are the apostles of civilization.

Almost any form of organization is better than political confusion, and it cannot be denied that the political machine gives a kind of stability to American politics. It is probable that the Republican machine saved the country from a debased coinage and partial repudiation in 1896; but I think there are few who would hesitate to condemn the method. The political machine is as soulless as a steel corporation, and crushes out freedom of discussion and independence of action as a machine crushes whatever stands in its way. Its managers will inevitably cease to be statesmen and become mechanics. It will pervert politics from a science to a trade.

No wonder that there are no longer great orators in America like Clay, Webster, and Sumner, for free speech and independence of character are the life of the orator. There is no soil now in this country for oratory to grow

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in. Political discussions have to be so guarded for fear that what is said in the State of New York may give offence in Illinois, or *vice versa,* that true eloquence—which means speaking out one's mind—is no longer possible; and what encouragement is there for oratory in the halls of Congress when every speaker knows that the measure under discussion will be decided by a strict party vote. Evarts was a lawyer of rare ability, but he passed six years in the United States Senate without distinguishing himself from his colleagues by one memorable effort in behalf of reform. Yet Evarts had already proved himself a statesman.

All honor to those true-hearted, patriotic men who continue to find a foothold in American politics in spite of many obstacles; who adapt themselves to conditions as they find them, and even compromise with their own consciences for the public good.

One of the worst consequences of machine politics is its effect on character,—on individuality. John Stuart Mill says in his "Essay on Liberty:"

"It really is of importance, not only what men do, but also what manner of men they are that do it. Among the works of man, which human life is rightly employed in perfecting and beautifying, the first in

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importance surely is man himself. Supposing it were possible to get houses built, corn grown, battles fought, causes tried, and even churches erected and prayers said by machinery—by automatons in human form—it would be a considerable loss to exchange for these automatons even the men and women who at present inhabit the more civilized parts of the world, and who assuredly are but starved specimens of what nature can and will produce. Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing." *

Without individuality there is no true greatness, no qualitative greatness; but democratic principle is inimical to qualitative greatness, and therefore tends to substitute for it an imaginary form of greatness. It is rare good fortune when a political party enjoys the services of two such complete statesmen as Clay and Webster; but in 1848 both were passed over to confer the presidential honor upon the victor of Buena Vista, by no means a remarkable victory gained against a weak and unskilful enemy. The Dewey craze was a recent

* Mill "On Liberty," p. 106.

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example of this popular exaggeration of character and ability.

It is rather a startling fact, but strictly true, that there was more freedom of discussion during the last twenty-five years in the German Reichstag than in the Congress of the United States. The law which prevents criticism of the imperial family does not interfere with perfect freedom of debate, and government measures in the Reichstag were subjected by orators like Windhorst, Lasker, Richter and others, to such a searching investigation as might recall the best days of our own Senate. The reason for this is that there is always a body of high-minded independent delegates in the Reichstag whose votes are only to be won by sound argument. Some of the finest oratory of the last half-century was called forth by Bismarck's "Kulturkampf" and anti-socialist laws.

Even a cross-eyed person can see that the political machine depends for its support on the practice of distributing offices as the reward of party services. Take this linchpin out of its wheels and the vehicle will soon come to the ground. It is natural and proper that prominent public speakers and other exceptional men should take offices under a President whom

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they have assisted in electing, and if they lose their places after a few years it is no particular hardship; but for the great army of clerks and other subordinates in the government service to be turned out of office is a more serious matter. It may be years before a large proportion of them can obtain employment, and meanwhile they have to be supported by their relatives, or perhaps beeome degraded. It is a terrible thing for a salaried man with a family to be thrown out of line, and for this reason the best class of employees avoid government service as long as they can. It is also true that where appointments depend upon personal favor a large proportion of them are likely to be unfit or injudicious; and it is no less unfortunate that the faithful performance of his duties by a government official should count for nothing towards the security of his position. Consequently too many government employees are equally negligent and insolent, while the general community suffers from these periodic overturns. The principle of rotation in office is injurious to all parties concerned.

Let us suppose that a clerk in a grocery store acquires some local political influence, helps to elect a Congressman, and receives an office in

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the custom-house as his reward. From the moment he accepts the position his influence declines, for people suspect at once that his motives are not wholly disinterested, and after the next Congressional election he is superseded by another, who passes through the same experience. In July, 1897, after a sufficient number of changes had been made, President McKinley issued an order to the effect that no government officials should be removed for political reasons; but previous to the election of 1900 it was found necessary to rescind this order, because where one man held an office there were four or five who wanted to take it away from him, and if the hopes of these aspirants were cut off it was likely that they might desert in a body to the opposite party,—a loss of perhaps half a million votes. In this way our presidential elections become largely a game of chance with Federal offices for prizes.

Hon. E. R. Hoar was the pioneer in civil service reform—that is, the first to inaugurate it within his own party. Such an uproar as the proposed reform caused in Washington had not been known since the days of the Missouri Compromise, and Judge Hoar was obliged to retire to private life. This was in 1869, and since that time how many patriotic men have

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labored zealously in this cause, and what have they accomplished? It was less than twenty-five years from the mobbing of Garrison to the emancipation of the negroes, and it is now more than thirty years since Judge Hoar left Grant's cabinet. If civil service reform is anywhere in sight, it would take a powerful telescope to discover it.

The last report of the New York Civil Service Reform Club was called a humorous document, and, looked at in a certain way, it was so; but in a higher sense it was a pathetic publication. It was a record of promises broken and laws evaded. President Cleveland, who was remarkable for the excellence of his appointments, went into office under solemn pledges that he would make no removals for political purposes, except for cases of "offensive partisanship." This exception, however, appears to have covered nearly the whole case, for during his term of office eighty-eight per cent. of the classified service was relegated to an "innocuous desuetude."* If he had only removed some fifty per cent., so that the Democrats might enjoy a fair proportion of the spoils, he could not have been greatly blamed. Presi-

* These expressions have become historic.

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dent Harrison not only permitted the appointees of Cleveland to be turned out, but also several thousand Republicans who had held office since the time of Garfield. Nor did a large proportion of those who had been previously removed recover their places.

Cleveland and Harrison were both good Presidents; but who can stem the current of Niagara? Yet the fact remains that this evil does not exist in Great Britain, France, or Germany.

There may have been some improvement in the character of appointments during the past twelve years, but the civil service examinations have not contributed much to this. Formal examinations are no test of character and very little of ability. Thousands of applicants passed this test, but only those were appointed who had political influence; and a philanthropic clergyman has complained that the examinations served as a screen behind which Senators and Congressmen could escape public pressure and be more autocratic than before.*

If all our legislators were like Sumner, civil service reform would be quite unnecessary. Others, especially Seward and Evarts, have

* Rev. Edward E. Hale.

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made good use of their government patronage; but Sumner was the St. Louis of American politics. In securing offices for applicants he never considered his own interest, and considered that of his party but little, although in this manner he served his party to the best advantage. For the higher offices he considered mainly the qualifications of the appointee, but for minor positions also the necessities of the individual. No caucus-packers, or other political rowdies, were ever endorsed by Sumner, and the clerk or postmaster who had Sumner against his name could depend on holding his office during good behavior. There are those still living who can testify to the truth of this.

The practice of assessing office-holders for party purposes is a kind of highway robbery, and ought to be made a penitentiary offence.

It is much to be feared that *legislative corruption* is growing to be a serious evil, though perhaps more at the capitals of certain States than in Congress itself. The demand for charters and privileges by mammoth corporations affords opportunities in this line such as ordinary human nature is not strong enough to resist. The lobbies of legislative halls are a

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dark labyrinth for the imagination to work in, and much suspicion, just or unjust, is always connected with them; but when the directors of a large corporation, whose character is beyond reproach, admit that they have expended some twenty thousand dollars on the Legislature of moral Massachusetts and decline to give further explanation, it looks very much as if something were wrong. The following extract from Moorfield Storey's oration before the august assemblage of American lawyers at Saratoga in 1894 throws more light upon this subject:

"Let me proceed at once to the State Legislature, in which the general mass of our people is most fairly represented. What is their character? In many States certainly there has grown up an irresponsible body between the people and their representatives, which undertakes to sell legislation and finds the business extremely profitable. These merchants attempt first to become acquainted with the State and to single out in each representative or senatorial district the men best suited for their purpose. Some time before the nominations are made they approach those who are honored with their confidence, flatter them by sympathizing with their political aspirations, and help them by influence or money to secure their nomination and election. The men thus approached are often

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honest, though not necessarily so; but honest men can be flattered, and where one has received pecuniary or other assistance in securing a coveted office he naturally feels kindly towards those who have helped him. Where the candidate is not scrupulous, the tie is stronger."

* * * * * * *

"Not many years ago, in my own State, a body of men seeking a street railroad charter received a very large sum of money from a corporation which desired the same right. The sellers had no franchise, no property, no right of any kind to sell; but no one doubted that the buyers acquired what they considered fully worth the money which they paid. What they bought was an organization which had secured and could control an important body of votes,—the result of a campaign in various parts of the State over an issue which the people never heard of, and this had a very distinct market value.

"The Legislature thus composed is charged with the duty of electing a Speaker. Each candidate for this office wishes votes. Each lobbyist, each corporation, each body of promoters wishes to control the committees, which can make or mar certain measures. The candidate who is willing to buy votes by promising places on committees has a great advantage in a Legislature made up as I have described, and in many cases the bargain is made. In every case there is danger that such a bargain will be made, and the danger is constantly increasing."

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Mr. Storey's reputation for veracity would be a sufficient guarantee for this statement, if the dignified audience to whom he delivered it were not so. He is in a position to know whereof he speaks; but we are not obliged to accept the evidence of a single witness in this important case, for a number of eminent lawyers in our largest cities have testified to the same effect.*

Legislative corruption is a far worse evil than a weak or misguided executive. The latter resembles a blighted harvest which another season may remedy; but a corrupt legislature is like a miasma which vitiates the air we breathe. From Austria, Germany, France, and England comes the complaint that parliaments do a great deal of talking, but accomplish little for the public good. The danger from legislative bodies resides in their lack of responsibility. A constitutional executive, whether king or president, can be pinned down to something definite; but a legislature is more of the nature of a quicksand, as those who have had occasion to deal with them can bear witness.

That members of Congress should speculate

* Notably John C. Ropes, the author of our best history of the War for the Union.

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in stocks whose value they might afterwards influence by their votes is not surprising; but this practice has been openly avowed in the United States Senate as a matter of no concern.

The scandal of the *Credit Mobilier* was not so bad in itself as the subsequent behavior of Congress in regard to the affairs of the Union Pacific. The present of a few shares of stock was intended, no doubt, to prevent interference; but it is significant that after the railroad had come into the possession of Jay Gould and was exceedingly prosperous no attempt was made by the government to collect its just dues; and ten years later, after Gould had sucked the orange and sold out to honest but ingenuous men, Congress made an effort to recover the government indebtedness. A worse time could not have been selected, for the company was now nearly bankrupt, and a forced sale of the Union Pacific property finally wiped out the government claim. By this negligent, if not criminal, procedure some thirty millions of dollars were lost to the national treasury.

As an example of governmental extravagance, it is only necessary to point to our enormous pension list, which in the year 1900

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amounted to $140,877,316.02, or more than that of the whole Russian army establishment. In other countries, after a severe war, the pension list gradually diminishes until the next war increases it again, but in the United States the pension list grows apace with almost every Congress. There were about three hundred thousand Union soldiers killed and wounded in the war, and if those who died had all left widows or other persons dependent upon them, and if all those who were wounded still survived, their pensions at forty dollars per month would come to about the present government item; but the probability is that not more than seventy per cent. had relatives who had any reason to expect a pension on their account, and of those who were living in 1865, according to life insurance tables, only about sixty per cent. would survive until 1900. From this calculation, therefore, it appears that the United States pension list is nearly twice as expensive as it ought to be; or, in other words, some fifty millions of dollars of the people's money is misappropriated every year. The reason for this is not that there are a great many old soldiers deserving of assistance, but because the Grand Army of veterans is a powerful political machine which has to be conciliated. The soldiers

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who saved the Union for us certainly deserved great consideration, but it is equally true that they have received great consideration. When they returned from the war the best places were always reserved for them; and this was only right. The national government should not be turned into a charitable institution.

The cost of the Philippine war of over a hundred millions for the year 1900 seems equally extravagant. This means a hundred thousand men, at a thousand dollars a year each, to suppress a guerilla revolution. If the United States should happen to go to war with France or Germany, what would it cost at that rate?

The present writer once held a civil office in one of our navy-yards and had an opportunity to observe how the government funds were wasted. Offices were multiplied to suit the demands of ward politicians; ship-keepers were employed to watch old hulks which had better have been sold for fire-wood; foremen were enrolled without any workmen, and extra time was allowed on most frivolous pretexts, until the commandant finally declared that if he found any man working on July 4th he would have him discharged. One sly fellow obtained fifty-two days' pay in a single month. The average work of the civil officers was not more

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than three hours per day; and a neighboring grocer was well supported by the sale of whiskey.* Thousands of dollars were expended in fitting up rooms for ordinary men, and some months afterwards the ordinary men were all discharged. Six weeks previous to a Congressional election over five hundred workmen were taken on the pay-rolls, and were discharged again ten days after the election. It is only fair to state that in these respects there has been a decided improvement in navy-yard management during the present administration.

Foreigners have always noticed a certain lack of *style* and *dignity* in the presidency of the United States which does not depend entirely on the occupant. The White House counts for nothing in Washington society.

John Randolph proved a true prophet when he predicted that the younger Adams would be the last President to "wear the purple;" but it was Jefferson who first set the fashion in this direction by fastening his horse to the wooden fence which surrounded the Capitol, an episode which has become historic. This would be justly deemed an affectation in any President who should do the same at the present time;

* Appendix D.

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but the lack of a refined and gentlemanly tone still continues. To illustrate this point, let us consider the following telegraphic despatch which was sent to the Associated Press from Washington in December, 1883.

"This evening General Grant came into Willard's Hotel (Washington), and was looking over the register, when a man jumped up from the side benches, went to General Grant, and slapped him on the shoulder with a 'Hello, General! how are you?' It was Tom Murphy, Grant's former collector at the port of New York. General Grant turned round and shook hands with him, after which they both went up to the rooms of General Fitz-John Porter."

What humiliation to have been President of the United States for eight years and then to be slapped on the back by Tom Murphy without being able to resent it! Murphy's resignation was required for the benefit of the Republican party, and there is no occasion for any further consideration of him; but it is hardly credible that General Grant would have permitted such familiarity from any one when he was in command of the Army of the Potomac. The presidency would seem to be demoralizing.

I believe this evil may be traced directly to the common notion that the President is the servant of the people.

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When Frederick the Great designated himself as "the humble servant of the state," he expressed the just relation between a chief magistrate and the nation which he governs; but the hackneyed phrase, "the servant of the people," is capable of another and widely different interpretation. Taken collectively and objectively, it does not differ much from Frederick's statement; but taken subjectively and individually it is simply degrading. Washington would have scorned to call himself the servant of the people. He would have said, "I am here to enforce the laws, to enact justice, and guard the interests of the Republic." Such is the difference between colonial America and the twentieth century. To a great majority of the present generation "the servant of the people" means the servant of whichever party is in the ascendant, and they expect the President to consider the interests of his party before those of the Republic. To minds like Tom Murphy's the phrase serves as an insidious flattery, which greatly increases their self-conceit and presumption. The President of the United States ought to be at least as dignified, as independent, and as free to choose his own associates as the president of a life insurance company is.

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A glaring instance of Congressional bad taste appeared in 1870, when the United States Senate commissioned an inexperienced young woman, called "Vinnie Ream," to model a statue of President Lincoln for the national capitol. Sumner rose in indignation and exposed the absurdity of such an appointment, but he found few to support him in his honorable position. He was perhaps the only member of that body who had made a critical study of sculpture; but it does not require a knowledge of art to condemn such a proceeding. It was a piece of senseless frivolity. Vinnie Ream was a persistent lobbyist. Her tearful eyes and coquettish looks carried the day against the best orator in Congress. She made the hideous object which still disfigures our legislative halls, and then disappeared. Lincoln's strong, rugged features required a master hand to give them animation, and he certainly deserved better consideration from persons in such high position.

Emerson, in his "Fortunes of the Republic," drew a picture of the American politician of his time, which is the more forcible as he evidently intended the address as a defence of democratic principles.* "Positions on bank

* Appendix E.

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and insurance boards," he said, "give him an easy swagger. He orders Catawba wine at the hotel to treat his friends, and very soon he cannot do without it." Jeffersonian principles, especially in a self-made man, are inclined to give an easy swagger and a sense of importance which is pleasant enough to his constituents, but disagreeable to those who ought to be on an equality with him. The American politician is mainly what circumstances make him. He is obliged to suit himself to the interests, ideas, and even whims of his constituents as a courtier does to those of his monarch. Emerson probably described those with whom he was familiar, and a politician in central New York is a different person from one in Tennessee. The style of man that is required to carry a Congressional district will always differ in different wards of a large city.

A few years ago a Congressman from Mississippi had an altercation with another Congressman from Missouri, which resulted in a physical conflict, not according to the Marquis of Queensberry rules, but with such implements as were ready to hand. It ended in the Congressman from Missouri being struck by a heavy glass inkstand, which made an ugly gash in his head and caused him to retire

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from the lists. No notice was taken of this rowdy performance, however, either by the police or the House of Representatives. That such an affair should take place between a Congressman from Ohio and a Congressman from Connecticut is hardly conceivable; but if a captain in the United States Army can be dismissed the service for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, there is no good reason why the same rule should not apply to members of Congress. The difference now is that the etiquette of the army requires that an officer should be a gentleman, whereas a Congressman may or may not be, according to the circumstances. A high-minded representative always indicates a constituency of rather exceptional culture.*

We are now in the building period of our national existence. As soon as a well organized nation acquires superfluous wealth, it commences to build, and the edifices which arise in this manner serve as monuments of its civilization. Nor have the people of the United States reason to be ashamed of their city halls

* This depends, however, somewhat on the ability of the individual. For instance, Greenhalge was the successor of B. F. Butler.

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and capitols,—with the exception of the Boston custom-house and a few other architectural monstrosities. The State-house at Hartford and the State Assembly room at Albany are quite worthy of a great republic; but at the same time it must be confessed that in this respect they are not equal to those of other nations. The public buildings at Washington were unluckily designed when the Grecian style happened to be in fashion, and, though they have a simple cyclopean solidity of appearance, they lack the elegance of the best modern architecture. They cannot be compared favorably with the new Houses of Parliament, the Louvre and palace of Versailles, or the Escurial at Madrid. The sole advantage of the Grecian style is its adaptation to sculptural ornament, and in adopting it at Washington we have simply enacted Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark. The national capitol is an impressive building at a distance, but on a near approach we find the central building is constructed of granite painted white to match the marble wings, and is rather too small for a just proportion. Neither is the Grecian style well adapted to the uses of modern life. None of our great public men have taken much interest in this subject, and our architecture has

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been left to legislative committees, who often selected the architects on personal grounds. In Athens it was not only Pericles who interested himself in the building of the Acropolis, but the whole population. In the Athens of America a tasteless edifice like the new court-house could be erected without the protest of a single lawyer. On the other hand, Fifth Avenue and Commonwealth Avenue, as well as the business portion of Chicago, are a decided credit to the country; and this would seem to show that it is a lack of personal interest in, and supervision over, government work which is the cause of its mediocre quality.

The indirect influence of a government is far-reaching. It is natural for a people to look upon their rulers as models of behavior and as examples in various modes of procedure,—the more so if elected by their own instrumentality. The industrious, frugal, and stoical life of Frederick the Great has influenced the character of the Prussian people to the present time, and in like manner the off-hand frontier style of General Jackson produced an effect on American life long after his death. It was said forty years ago that you could distinguish an admirer of "Old Hickory" by the tilt of his hat.

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The *ratio essendi* of mammoth American fires may be traced to the fact that the fire departments in our large cities are organized on democratic principles. Such, at least, was the case in the great Boston fire of 1872. The chief of the fire department at that time was a carpenter by trade, who had been elected by his associates because he was a good presiding officer and could make a taking off-hand speech. He was wholly incompetent for the occasion, and a subsequent fire in a tenement-house, in which several firemen lost their lives, proved him so. The fire departments in our large cities ought not to be managed on democratic principles, but on military principles; and it is difficult to imagine any danger to republican institutions that might result from this. The chiefs of such fire departments should be appointed by the governors of the States, and they ought to be trained and accomplished military engineers, who would be prepared for great emergencies and act with suitable energy and decision. Any one who is acquainted with the configuration of Boston streets will recognize that the fire ought properly to have been extinguished before crossing Franklin Street; and it cannot be doubted that an investigation of the Baltimore fire will lead

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to some similar conclusion. Great conflagrations are worse than war, and require even a more strenuous and energetic method of treatment.

Another unfavorable consequence of the democratic dogma is its influence on domestic affairs. It tends to break down the authority of parents and to encourage children to seek a premature independence. It weakens the sense of obligation which the different members of a family ought to feel towards one another. It introduces an element of discord in family life. Parents have been known to take the votes of their children in regard to important domestic affairs, although the youngest might not be above fourteen, and to congratulate themselves on this as an illustration of democratic principles. Many a young man has gone to destruction, or at least has failed to reach the proper development of his faculties, because his parents were lacking in clear ideas on this subject. Influence is not government; and it has been said before that the family is only a picture of the state on a small scale.

The difficulty of obtaining house servants in certain portions of the country is coming to be a serious matter. Formerly, a good cook and chamber-maid could be obtained for seven dol-

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lars a week, but now they cost ten or eleven dollars,—a considerable sum to take out of the income of a cashier or a professor. The reason of this is because the daughters of American farmers and mechanics think themselves too fine to go out to service, where they would learn so much that would be improving and advantageous to them when they came to have households of their own.

The demand is continually increasing, while the supply is a constant quantity. Irish girls come to America and remain until they have saved one or two hundred dollars (which they can do easily enough, for their expenses are almost nothing), and then return to their own country to get married. What are American girls of the same class doing meanwhile? They flock to the cities and go into shops, where they learn nothing that is of any service to them, and at the same time are exposed to great temptations, to which only too many of them succumb. The old adage, that a haughty spirit goes before a fall, receives here a painful and humiliating exemplification.

For the same reason it has become equally difficult to obtain trustworthy nurses for children; and as for wet-nurses the medical profession has quite given up the hope of obtain-

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ing them. In Europe sufficiently good nurses of both classes are always to be had, even such as are suited to the requirements of a royal family; but an American mother, who may be unable for valid reasons to nurse her own child, has to trust to its being reared by artificial means. This would seem to indicate a lack of humanity in the community at large.

REFORM

The one universal law is change.

No matter how well founded a government may be and how deeply rooted in the hearts of its people, changes are sure to take place either in the form or in the manner of its administration; and, if this does not take place gradually, it will finally come in a revolutionary manner. The Church of Rome has the oldest government in Europe, and its form of administration has changed little to outward appearance since the eleventh century; yet the Catholicism of Leo XIII. was not that of Pius IX., and that of Pius IX. was not the same as the Popes of the eighteenth century. The Catholic faith has changed with every ecumenical council since the time of Charlemagne, and the Christian religion has changed with it. Religious and political institutions are but the outward sym-

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bol of the inner man, and if they do not keep pace with his internal development he tears them off as a snake does his old skin.

This is peculiarly true of the United States of America. Our external forms are much the same as in 1789, but internally as a nation we have changed in a greater degree than any people on this earth. Never since the dark ages has the internal constitution of a nation changed so much. In 1789 we were almost a homogeneous people, and almost without exception Protestants; but during the last hundred years we have absorbed an enormous foreign population, almost wholly of the laboring classes, and not the best of those. The negroes have become citizens and have increased enormously in number. Never before has a nation been composed of such diverse ingredients. Only the Austrian Empire can be compared with the United States in this respect; and in Austria the various races have each a separate location and are not much mingled together. Neither has the Austrian government the burden of eight million negroes to deal with. In 1783 that rare sovereign, Joseph II., endeavored to establish a uniform code of laws and civil institutions over all his dominions. But this was found impracticable, for criminal

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procedures which worked well in Bohemia were no better suited to the less intelligent Slavonic races than American criminal law is to our frontier settlements. A similar trouble exists at the present time in the Austrian Parliament, which of all legislative bodies is the most incongruous and difficult for a ministry to deal with. Here, in addition to the negroes, we have an Irish Catholic population which enjoys all our national advantages and yet persists in remaining foreign to us in sentiment and interest. They are a nation within a nation. The socialistic agitators of Europe who fly to us for refuge are another disturbing element.

How long the people of the United States will be able to control these divergent forces is an enigmatic problem. Evidently, as the population increases, the more difficult it will become to harmonize them. It seems as if within the coming fifty years our primitive institutions must undergo a change. If our minds are prepared for such an eventuality, and we are ready to direct the movement when the time arrives, it will no doubt be a change for the better; but if we heedlessly drift into it and permit ourselves to be surprised by an unthinking popular cataclysm, the change will probably be for the worse.

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American writers when they rail at monarchical institutions do not realize that the form of government that a nation assumes depends largely on its geographical position. The unimpeded development of constitutional government in England during the Middle Ages could not have taken place in France or Germany at the same time, owing to political complications; and if the United States were situated like Russia, with Turkey on one border and a host of Tartars on another, it is doubtful if its present government could endure the strain.

As a rule, American editors show a degree of sensitiveness in regard to monarchy which suggests a lack of confidence in their own institutions. There is no occasion for this. Now and then one meets with a college professor, an artist, or an old Boston tory who openly professes his preference for the English form of government, royal family and all; but these are like a drop in the bucket. Gamalial Bradford once urged the adoption of certain points in the English constitution, such as giving seats to Cabinet officers in the House of Representatives, but this in the case of a hostile Speaker would make their position one of intolerable disadvantage. It could not be introduced with-

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out bringing the rest of the British system along with it. During Grant's administration there was a slight aroma of imperialism in the air, but it disappeared with the first change of the wind.

Demosthenes admitted that there were certain disadvantages in popular governments, but he said, "We prefer to suffer these rather than to lose the control of our own affairs." Monarchy is a mediæval institution, and its roots extend deep into the past. Mediæval institutions have never existed in the Western Hemisphere, and a monarchy transplanted from Europe would be as short-lived as a tree without its tap root. The attempt of Napoleon III. in Mexico is a case in point.

There are some characteristics of the English system which it would be well to imitate if we could do so without also imitating its defects. The British government has a dual character. It is an excellent government for England and Scotland; but if Froude's statements are to be credited, it has proved thus far a bad government for Ireland, and often a highly vicious government abroad. What other nation has shown such an unprincipled foreign policy during the past hundred years —from Pitt's complicity in the conspiracy

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against Napoleon's life, to Disraeli's support of the Turkish massacres in Bulgaria? The English people were of course innocent enough of these proceedings.

There are a good number, and among them many persons of dignified character, who favor the adoption of John Stuart Mill's doctrine of female suffrage, both as a natural right and a reformatory movement.

It is difficult to see what advantage could be gained by this extension of suffrage, and it would certainly be an onerous duty not only on the class of women whom we call ladies, but also on a large proportion of wives and mothers in general. There are women in every community who are as well qualified to vote and take as lively an interest in public affairs as most of the men, but these are the exception, not the rule, and they would easily be outnumbered by the dull-witted washerwoman and the frivolous shop-girls, not to mention other frivolous members of society. In bad weather it is a sufficiently burdensome duty to many of the other sex. If, on the other hand, the franchise is an inalienable right of manhood, there is no reason why it should not be the right of woman as well. If the major premise is admitted, the conclusion follows as a matter of

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course. Abstract theories are of small use in practical politics.

The danger would be that when women vote as a class and for class interests they would want half of the offices, including the Vice-Presidency. It can hardly be doubted that the practice would have a coarsening effect. It is part of a woman's nature to shrink from general publicity, and this feeling ought to be encouraged and not stifled in them. That female suffrage apparently works favorably in Wyoming, on the outskirts of civilization, is no evidence that it would prove a success in Ohio or New York.*

It would seem only just that women who pay taxes on real estate should have a voice in the distribution of the public funds, and there is no good reason why this should not be done by power of attorney; similarly, men who are unable to go to the polls on account of sickness or other serious disability.

The only logical remedy is to restrict the suffrage. By making the ballot common property we cheapen its value. Let it become an honor and a privilege,—the privilege of a good citizen. Since our government was founded, the

* John Stuart Mill's idolization of his wife cannot be commended on rational grounds. See G. Brandes' Essay.

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country has been filled up with an immense mass of immigrants who neither understand nor take an interest in our institutions. Those of them who appreciate the blessings of a popular government and are willing to adapt themselves to the right conditions for it, may well become part and parcel of us; but if they cling to their foreign notions, consider themselves foreigners, and look upon our government with hostility as the anarchists do, there is no reason why they should have a voice in determining elections and deciding public questions. Make the suffrage a prize to which they can attain by industry, good behavior, and self-improvement, and they will not only value it highly and use it with greater discretion, but they will feel more respect for the government which protects and befriends them.

It is useless to try to purify the stream while the fountain is defiled. Ignorance and dulness are a power in the state as well as intelligence and education. The perpetual necessity of condescending to the masses must affect politics unfavorably at the very start. The President feels it as he sits in the White House, and it becomes a drag on public business like that which tires out the captured salmon. Public addresses will always play a prominent part

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in popular government, and if it be true, as George Eliot says, "that no man ever retained his influence over a mixed multitude except by lowering his moral standard," we must also admit the converse of this, that the more select his audience the more elevated the discourse of the speaker will necessarily be. The fine tone of Demosthenes and the elegance of Cicero indicate the superior quality of the audiences which they addressed. If this were carried too far, the means would of course defeat the end, and the result would be an oligarchy instead of a republic. There is no danger of this, however, so long as all respectable citizens are included in the voting list.

How then are we to distinguish between respectable citizens and those who are not?

This can only be done approximately, just as we decide the age of manhood at twenty-one and of womanhood at eighteen. In Spain the age of manhood is fixed at twenty-five.

In the first place, all men of decidedly bad character ought to be excluded. Inebriates, and persons convicted in the courts of small offences, ought to be disfranchised for a term of years, as they were formerly in the Massachusetts colony. To these might be added gamblers and other persons of dubious repu-

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tations, like James Fiske, Jr., who may not, however, come within the range of the law.

Consider what a difference such a law would make in New York City alone. No more Tammany rings to harass the weary taxpayers. Under the present system no discrimination is made between honest men and scoundrels, and a graduate of the penitentiary can vote the week after he is discharged, if he only finds some one kind enough to pay his poll-tax.

A prominent Chicago politician who assisted at the nomination of Garfield in 1880 said to me once:

"No man ought to vote who cannot read and write, and none should vote at municipal elections except those who own real estate."

I think such opinions are more common among our public men than is generally supposed; but they do not dare to state them.

A reading and writing qualification would be hardly sufficient; for a man who reads nothing but vulgar newspapers and dime novels might be less fitted to understand politics than one who could not read at all. Hamilton, in his address to the Constitutional Convention of 1787, advocated the adoption of a suffrage based on the possession of land; and this, when

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land was so cheap and plenty, would not seem to have been unfair, for it is only a local habitation which can give a substantial position in society. But at the present time such a law would be too favorable to the wealthier classes. The English five-pound franchise, which served its purposes in a rough, uneven way, has been replaced by Gladstone with freehold suffrage, which opens the ballot to every renter of a tenement, no matter how ignorant he may be, and excludes the higher class of house servants, who in England are more intelligent than most of the farmers. It would not seem to be difficult to devise a method that would be more practical and at the same time more just than either of these plans.

In 1893 a law was proposed in Mississippi to solve the negro problem requiring that every voter should be able to read and understand the State constitution. This was not adopted, however, because it was found that too many white persons would be disfranchised in this manner.

Another objection to such a plan would be that it might afford too much latitude to the judgment of the registration board. An examination in arithmetic and American history might be a more exact and fair method of de-

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termining the intellectual condition of a candidate. If the examinations were conducted with dignity, they would have a good effect in stimulating the ambition of the applicants to a better understanding of public affairs. It is fortunate that all the advantages of life are not as common as air and water.

Of course the larger portion of the community would not be obliged to pass such an examination. All professional persons would be exempt from it, as well as merchants, shopkeepers, and their clerks, and in those States which have a well-grounded school system, the certificate of a grammar-school teacher would serve the same purpose. All owners of real estate to the extent of eight hundred or a thousand dollars ought to have the franchise, for they are most directly interested in the assessment and expenditure of taxes. Master mechanics likewise should have it, and all persons holding positions which indicate character and responsibility, for such are among the most judicious members of society. It might be presumed that a gardener who is acquainted with the culture of different plants would also be well-informed on other matters, yet according to the present English system he and others like him would not be permitted to vote unless

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they lived in tenements for which they paid a direct rent.

This is a mere sketch in outline drawing, only intended to demonstrate how a restricted suffrage may be accomplished. That it seems difficult of accomplishment at the present time is not to be denied; but when we consider how impossible negro suffrage appeared in 1860, and how readily ten years later it was carried through with all the different forms of constitutional amendment, one can hardly doubt that a more conservative reform might be accomplished without great difficulty. The practical point in such cases is to take advantage of the right moment.

First, however, in order to open the way, the American people must turn their backs on the nineteenth century with all its solecisms and illusions. These may have had a temporary value, but they were not based on the eternal order, and their time has long since passed. The people of the United States are not lacking in good sense; and if they once clear their heads of the notion that government exists for the special benefit of the individual and that the justification of government depends on the consent of the governed, and shall substitute for these formulas the ideal of a government

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as set forth in the preamble to the national constitution, then sooner or later the change will come of its own volition. The effect on national character, which must result from considering government a moral necessity, is by no means to be despised.

In this way alone can the race problem be settled, by placing all races on an equality of intelligence and respectability; and if the race problem is not solved in a rational and peaceable manner it will finally end in violence and bloodshed.

The only way in which large American cities can secure a just and efficient municipal government is by restricting the suffrage to such persons as have a serious interest in the conduct of municipal affairs.

It may be the only way by which the tariff can be adjusted in an equitable manner to the various sections of this vast country; so that the Southern States shall not suffer for the benefit of the Northern, and the farmer be placed on an equality with the manufacturer.

There are many like Mr. George P. Bradford, the last survivor of the Brook Farm experiment, who are afraid that any limitation of the suffrage would be likely to result in class

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privileges and class legislation. It is difficult to imagine how this could happen in a country with a small standing army, and where the land-owners may be numbered by millions. The political conditions which resulted in the privileged classes of Europe during the past three centuries had their beginning far back in the early part of the Christian era. Similar effects may be produced at a future time from different causes, but what those causes may be it is now impossible to predict. The changes suggested here would tend to strengthen rather than weaken the influence of the large middle class who always form the chief depositary of power in a republic; and I think we can safely trust to them the preservation of their rights. What form of government will exist in America two or three centuries hence it is hardly possible to calculate, but we of to-day can best provide for the welfare of our descendants by thinking sensibly and acting according to our thought.

It is a common peculiarity of democracies to extol their favorite doctrines the more loudly while they complain of the evils resulting from their practice. This does not apply, however, to the author of the following extract, who was the most distinguished American journalist of

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his time, and yet has always been thoroughly republican in the best sense.

"Do not these superficial defects go deeper? Has there not been a constant tendency, developed by democratic institutions thus far everywhere, in ancient times as well as our own, to level down, sometimes to pare off, individualism in character or action; often to resent and pull down superiority, to encourage mediocrity, and to try to believe, if not to avow, as a necessary article of true democratic faith, that mediocrity is equal to the best and just as good? Naturally, this tendency, which a republic generally seems to develop, will lead to treating men not as individuals, but in great masses. It thus invades the field of education and converts the noblest work confided to man—the moulding, one might almost say the very creation, of individual character—into high-pressure arrangements for the production of scholars by wholesale; into schemes to shape and manufacture characters and lives like watches or steam-engines by machinery." *

This fine statement derives additional cogency from the popular character and political experience of the writer. It is a common democratic calumny to attribute aristocratic ten-

* An address at Leland Stanford, Jr., University by Hon. Whitelaw Reid.

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dencies to political opponents, but that has never happened in the case of Mr. Reid.

When a nation or a people falls into a mechanical mode of thinking, all intellectual progress is arrested; art languishes, literature declines, and religion becomes a desiccated form. The Catholic clergy are an example of this, but there are among them many men of earnest feeling and strong individuality, for their mode of life develops these qualities. But a mechanic character is in a measure death in life, and a people that falls into this rut may go on for centuries, like the Chinese or the Byzantine Greeks, but they have no longer a place in history.

The worst of all is the sophistical habit which is unconsciously engendered by continually defending a false position.

There are ebb and flood tides in political faith as there are in religious belief. At the commencement of the fifteenth century there was a fine constitutional government in Spain, but human nature became captivated with the divine right of kings, and Charles II. crushed Spanish liberty with scarcely a murmur of opposition. Now the majority believe just as firmly in the divine right of voting. They pin their faith on universal suffrage; and if you

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question the wisdom of it they lose their temper and are unwilling to discuss the question in a fair spirit. They consider the ballot an inalienable right, like life, liberty, and happiness. No one questions the right of men to life and liberty so long as they obey just laws, and are not required for military protection; but no people have a right to make fools of themselves by interfering in matters which they cannot understand. It is certain, however, that in due time the opinions of mankind will change, —that is the distinction between the European races and all others,—and when the change comes the question is, whether it will be for better or for worse; for a rational republic and a progressive civilization, or for Cæsarism and national decline.

CONCLUSION

The human body requires constant regeneration, and if anything interferes to prevent this for a length of time, the man or woman sickens, and either dies or passes through an abnormal condition which resembles those phases of history that are called revolution. In order to maintain a healthy physique, it is necessary to make a continuous effort to preserve good health, and even to improve it.

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Something like this happens in the history of nations. Unless there is a constant effort to improve the laws and adapt them to the varying conditions of civilization, the political condition of a state will become unsound, and historical phenomena will take place like those in England in the time of Cromwell, and in France at the close of the last century. It is the duty of modern civilization to avoid such catastrophes, and this can only be done by a continuous process of regeneration, by a serious consideration of existing conditions and the application of well-tested principles to such evils as are apparent in them.

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ALEXANDER HAMILTON

SENATOR LODGE deserves well of his country, not less for his popular biography of Hamilton than for his energetic efforts at the St. Louis convention of 1896 to bring his party to the adoption of a gold standard. At the time of Alexander Hamilton's death it may fairly be said that he was the most celebrated man in the civilized world. In the United States, it is true, he was overshadowed with the prestige of Washington, but as an intellect he was generally admitted to be without a rival, and in Europe he had the field wholly to himself. Only the youthful victor of Marengo might dispute with him there. Yet calumny and neglect had so dimmed his reputation that twenty years ago there were not a few intelligent Americans who never had heard Hamilton's name, or could not place him in their memories. Senator Lodge has rescued him from this oblivion and set forth his great achievements as a statesman and his character as a man in such a shining light that ignorance can no longer avail as an excuse. He has brought Hamilton down from the clouds, so

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that he is now within the reach of every schoolboy.

For Alexander Hamilton was a genius of the highest type, and finds his place with world-famous heroes like Socrates, St. Paul, Charlemagne, Luther, and Cromwell. It is possible that he might have been a great conqueror like Cæsar and his namesake, Alexander of Macedon; but we do not compare him to them, because Hamilton's work was wholly of a constructive character; and we cannot attribute to him those dubious motives which are commonly associated with the names of Cæsar and Alexander. The task he accomplished was not less difficult than that of Cromwell, but he only sacrificed one human life to it, and that was his own.

This is chiefly the reason why his celebrity has diminished instead of increased with time. The world remembers best those who have made the most noise in it; and the high-minded Aurelius has never been half so well remembered as the infamous Nero. Hamilton's work was so noiseless, modest, and unobtrusive that it is much to the credit of the age he lived in that this work was recognized at its true value. He was not the victor of a single defensive battle like Jackson; his name is not found in

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the long list of the nation's Presidents; nor did he have the great senatorial career of Clay and Sumner. After Washington's death he was the nominal head of the United States army, but the position was so purely nominal that he did not even wear uniform. The only important office that he ever held was that of Secretary of the Treasury, and, although he made this next in importance to the presidency, it is not a position that usually attracts a great deal of attention. His whole public activity was comprised within a space of ten years.

It is also true that Hamilton made powerful enemies who never ceased to calumniate him so long as they lived, and were echoed by a host of small parasitical writers such as always follow in the footsteps of power and position. This is so commonly the case with really great men that it may almost be taken as a test of true greatness. Washington escaped it because he was never a political leader. Shakespeare escaped it by his perpetual incognito; but Cromwell and Milton were vilified for more than a century; and how Bismarck has been calumniated in our own time! Bismarck's case is almost precisely like Hamilton's. His worst enemies have never been able to point

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at a single act in his public or private life that militates against the character of an honorable man. Yet the hue and cry still continue. The effectiveness of a statesman's policy may usually be measured by the antagonism it arouses; and so long as elections can be carried by wholesale mendacity men will be found willing to stoop to its use.

Hamilton was charged with being an aristocrat,—a common accusation to bring against a gentleman in all times and places. He was accused of being a monarchist because he did not believe in the political gospel of Rousseau. He was called an English sympathizer, which in those days was considered worse than atheism, because he objected to an alliance with the unstable and chaotic French republic. He was accused of falsifying the accounts of the Treasury and of bribing members of Congress. All these charges, except the last, are childish and absurd, but they had their influence on the ignorant and unthinking.

Senator Lodge says:

"The attempt to prove Hamilton dishonest . . . was headed by Giles, a rough, brazen, loud-voiced Virginian, fit for any bad work, no matter how desperate."

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Suffering under a similar accusation, Scipio Africanus, the savior of Italy, tore in pieces the accounts that would have vindicated him and went into voluntary exile,—happier in any place than among his ungrateful countrymen. Hamilton curbed his anger and demanded an investigation, which, after months of unnecessary labor, completely vindicated him and turned the tables on his malignant opponents. The story of an early love affair, which he confided to Madison, and which the latter divulged for political purposes, is perhaps less to Hamilton's discredit than to that of the friend who betrayed him.

Long after Hamilton's death Jefferson made the statement that "at a small dinner-party" during Washington's administration some one made the remark that, "if it were not for the bribery and corruption in the English government it would be the best in the world," and that Hamilton replied, "without bribery and corruption the English government would not be a practical success." This story has rather a suspicious sound of itself, and coming from the wily Virginian does not improve its character. Where the dinner-party was and who the other guests were have never been revealed, nor have other witnesses

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appeared to corroborate the assertion. Even if Hamilton spoke as reported, the remark is no evidence that he considered bribery indispensable to the practical administration of *our* government; yet this anecdote has been introduced into a history of the United States to illustrate the difference between the high-minded Jefferson and the cynical Hamilton.

Another fable that has been circulated concerning him was that in the convention of 1787 he advocated a monarchical form of government. The brief of his address at that convention has been preserved,—it was the most important address of the occasion,—and there is not a word in it favorable to monarchy, though much that might be called aristocratic.

Those who speak the plain truth are only too likely to be called cynical. Hamilton was an outspoken man, who said what he thought and meant what he said; he was never given to those honeyed phrases which are so sweet in the mouth, but bitter elsewhere. His frankness often gave offence, but it made his meaning plain. He knew human nature as it is, and dealt with it accordingly. The maxim that we ought not to think evil of others is not one of the wisest, because tending to illusions

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and self-deception,—a maxim coined in the interest of dissemblers and to the disadvantage of clear-sighted persons. The true way is of course not to blind ourselves to the faults of others, but to view them with charity.

The best and only necessary testimony to Hamilton's character is Washington's never failing attachment to him. Washington *knew men*—as ever a commander in an army must—and his own moral purity has not been overestimated. The recent attempts to make it appear that he was not a real American, but an English officer, in order to set up President Lincoln on a pedestal above all others, is no less than a crime against patriotism. Such a public character as Washington's would not have been possible in the England of George III.* He was the finest product of our colonial civilization,—a period which contained much that was beautiful and heroic.

Washington had no sooner seen Hamilton than he recognized his value. He made him his aid, and used him for the most difficult commissions all through the war, finally giving him the post of honor in the attack on Yorktown. When he became President he ap-

* It is only necessary to read Thackeray's "Virginians" to recognize this.

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pointed Hamilton to the most arduous position in his Cabinet, took his advice on the most important matters, and manfully supported him against powerful enemies. When in 1798 war was declared against France and President Adams begged Washington to take command of the United States army, he agreed to do so only on condition that Hamilton should be placed second to himself, and he insisted on this in spite of Adams's strong disinclination to make the appointment. It is also probable that Washington's farewell address, which has been so greatly admired, was written by Hamilton. It is certain that Hamilton made the draft of such an address, and that Washington highly approved it.*

Hamilton was well named Alexander, and this may have had some influence on his destiny, for he sprang into life like Athena from the head of Zeus in the complete panoply of a statesman. He was one of those prodigies intended by nature, like Mozart and Napoleon, to show the plenitude of her powers. What other men learn by slow experience, he seemed to know by intuition, and was as wise at twenty-five as the best of his contemporaries

* The writer has seen Washington's letter to Hamilton thanking him for this draft.

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were at forty. In this respect William Pitt is the only statesman with whom we can compare him; but Pitt was only an able party leader, and failed where Hamilton succeeded. Pitt has been called the evil genius of his time. He was easily carried off his feet by popular movements; whereas Hamilton was rooted like an oak against the storms of time, and not only proved a blessing to his own country, but still continues to be a blessing wherever wise men consult together *pro bono publico.*

He resembled Napoleon not only in his precocious intelligence, but also in his short stature, and in having been born on a small island. The island of Nevis, whence Hamilton came, was almost wholly unknown to the people of the thirteen colonies, so that it seemed to good patriots as if he had fallen from the skies for the preservation of the republic. Yet this was not wholly an advantage to him.

Let us now consider briefly what Hamilton accomplished.

The condition of the colonies after peace had been declared was so deplorable that it seemed to justify the predictions of British journalists that their separation from the mother country would prove a curse instead of a blessing. Most of the States were heavily

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in debt; their securities selling for less than half the nominal value. Their commerce had been ruined by the war, and British merchants had everywhere the upper hand,—as they have at present. There were no manufactures in the States of any value and their exports were mainly from the South. The central government was without authority, and the authority of the State governments was openly defied. Local interests and sectional prejudices ruled everywhere. The natural outcome of this condition would have been a string of isolated and petty republics like those on the western coast of South America. There was no good reason why the Spanish colonies should not have been united into a great nation at the time they achieved their independence, but the lack of a leader of sufficient ability and foresight. They had a Bolivar and other patriotic men, but no Hamilton.

All the better class of Americans perceived the danger they were in, but they knew not how to avert the evil. Hamilton alone thought out a scheme of government which he called federalism, by which a strong central authority would be established without conflicting in an unfavorable manner with the subordinate local governments.

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This is what the world had been waiting for for more than two thousand years. It was from the lack of such a government that the Greeks lost their independence, first to the Macedonians and afterwards to the Romans; and it was for the same lack that Rome itself finally became a military despotism. It was what Switzerland needed in the fourteenth and England in the seventeenth century. It is the only way that true national power can be made to harmonize with sectional interests.

Hamilton began to think on the subject before he left the army, for he recognized that the greatest difficulty Washington had to contend with was the weakness of the Continental Congress. An election to that body at the close of the war did not improve his opinion of it. For the next five years he continued to elaborate his plan and to discuss it with all the important men who came across his path. There were many who considered it a chimerical scheme, but he found sympathetic listeners in Madison, who was now the leading politician of Virginia, and in John Jay, who was scarcely less important in New York.

The commercial convention at Annapolis in 1786 gave him an opportunity which a less

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disinterested or watchful person would certainly have missed. He went to the convention and succeeded in persuading the delegates that uniform trade regulations could only be obtained through a strong central government.* The convention issued an address to the thirteen States in accordance with Hamilton's ideas, and this address was drafted by him, and he returned to his own State determined to carry the measure through.

New York was the most difficult of all the States to deal with, owing to the mixed character of its population and the continued influx of foreign immigrants. The governor was a narrow-minded, obstinate man, strongly opposed to the new scheme of government, and was supported in this by a solid majority; yet Hamilton outwitted him and obtained the appointment of delegates to the constitutional convention which was to be held at Philadelphia.

Democratic historians and magazine writers have shamefully belittled Hamilton's share in the proceedings of this famous assembly. He was the originator of the movement, and, like a skilful driver, now tightened, now slackened

* It was out of trade regulations that Bismarck also made a stepping-stone to German national unity.

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the reins as occasion required. He made the principal speech of the convention,—one of the longest on record,—in which he reviewed all the important governments of history, exposing their various advantages and defects; and it is more than likely that the preamble to the Constitution was composed by him as it stands to-day. It would naturally be the last portion of it to be written, and its widely embracing sentences immediately suggest the hand of Hamilton.

The next important step was to obtain the ratification of his own State, and public sentiment there was so strongly opposed to the new government that the cause seemed well-nigh hopeless. New York was then, as now, the pivotal State, but for a very different reason. It was large enough to maintain its own independence, and, if it did this, it would divide the Union in two. The way in which he secured ratification, not only by the *Federalist* letters, but by speech-making, canvassing, and exerting every possible pressure on public opinion, has always been the admiration of great statesmen. He finally carried the State by a narrow majority; but Napoleon's Italian campaign was not a more glorious success. The man who laid the corner-stone of the

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future United States of America had also placed the capstone on this noble structure. There is nothing like the *Federalist* in any other language. Works on politics written by philosophers and professors have their value, but in the *Federalist* we see the building up of a government as we might of a house,—stone upon stone and beam after beam. It is a government that has lasted now more than a century without essential change, while most other governments have passed through a series of revolutions. It is at once liberal and conservative, strong without being oppressive, and flexible without being too changeable. If it is not all we could desire, it may be safely affirmed that improvement lies in the direction which Hamilton indicated.

Madison wrote more than a third of the articles in the *Federalist,* and his style and form of reasoning are so much like Hamilton's that it is difficult to distinguish their work apart. Madison was a practical man and possessed one of the finest intellects of his time, but he had not the energy and backbone of Hamilton. Fisher Ames, in his letters from the first Congress, has given us a portrait of Madison which does not suggest a very resolute man. The truth is that Madison always

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depended on some other person for his guidance. At this time it was Hamilton, afterwards Jefferson, and finally Henry Clay.*

Washington's administration still remains the ideal of a republican government. As already remarked, Washington was not a political leader, and, after peace had been declared, he retired to Mount Vernon and took no part in public affairs until he was called to support the Constitutional Convention of 1787. He was first a civil engineer and afterwards a soldier, and knew as little of law as might be expected from those vocations. No one believed more firmly in the principle of every man to his trade. He was, however, one of the ablest of administrators, and his judgment in practical affairs was of the very best. There were no well-defined political parties at the time Washington was chosen President, but they sprang up soon enough; and yet Washington maintained to the end a position of neutrality and non-partisanship such as no President since has succeeded in attaining. John Quincy Adams and Lincoln have perhaps approached him most closely in this. He gave to the civil service the stamp of his own

* Bancroft states that among our early statesmen Madison was the one who held the best opinion of Clay.

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noble purity, and, what was of great importance in the commencement, he gave style and dignity to the presidential chair. His coach and six horses may have been slightly ostentatious, but they were according to the fashion of the eighteenth century, and no doubt had their effect like the high-flown oratory of Adams and Henry. The solecism that the President is the servant of his people had not yet been invented, and Washington never questioned his own right to oppose the will of the people if he considered it to the interest of the republic that he should do so. The two brilliant successes of his administration were Hamilton's daring financial policy, and the unwillingness of the government to join in the popular clamor against England in 1793. He gave the government of the United States such a fair start that it went a long way after his time without much help from any one. It seems a pity that he could not have been President four years longer.

Washington's single mistake, if he made one, consisted in taking Jefferson into his Cabinet. Either Madison or Pinckney ought to have been Secretary of State.

It is now difficult to comprehend how Jefferson possessed such influence at that period

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of the nation's history. He was not a man of practical ability; though an excellent writer, he was no orator; and now to be a good writer without also being a good speaker is of small moment in politics. Jefferson was either too cold or too timid for speech-making. He is said to have been the most skilful manipulator of his time, but no evidence of this exists. He had the art of pleasing everybody, especially inferiors, and would leave a chance acquaintance with the impression that they were the best friends in the world. He was not an original thinker like Hamilton, but rather an importer of foreign ideas like John Fiske. He was a fine French scholar—rare enough in those times—and was strongly influenced by Rousseau and the French philosophers. This was the worst of it, for he introduced French political ideas into America, where they were not at all required. It would have been better to have imported French elegance and French courtesy than their amateur politics.

Seward, in his "Life of John Quincy Adams," says in a sentence, "the firmness of Washington, the wisdom of Hamilton, and the humanity of Jefferson." This is now Jefferson's real distinction. He was one of the first to raise his voice against the injustice of

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African slavery in a most eloquent statement, of which the abolitionists afterwards made good use. In this, however, he did not differ from the majority of his countrymen. Except in certain localities, like Georgia and the frontiers, Americans have always been a humane people, less brutal than the English and less cruel than the Spaniards. In some notable instances they would seem to have been even too lenient. A Harvard professor has lately called the United States a barbarous, semi-civilized country, but he must have forgotten this most important element of civilization as well as the universal respect with which woman as woman is treated here.* In most European cities a lady cannot go out alone and on foot without the risk of being insulted.

What strange characters came to the surface as leaders in the French Revolution and afterwards disappeared,—mostly by the knife of the guillotine! I would not compare Jefferson with Danton and Robespierre, and yet he belongs in a far-off way to the same class. During the latter half of the eighteenth century there was everywhere a spirit of rebellion in the air, not alone against monarchical gov-

* C. E. Norton at Radcliff College Commencement, 1901.

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ernment, but against all constituted authority. Most of the governments of Europe had become so corrupt and even licentious that it was impossible to respect them any longer. Even the mercantile classes began to look upon government as an evil in itself, to be escaped from if possible, a theory which has resulted in the modern doctrine of free trade. Jefferson, who sympathized with every popular movement, good or bad, of his time, became one of the exponents of this fallacy; and the pitfalls into which he stumbled during his administration were owing to the fact that he was a President who did not believe in governing. Otherwise he was like a boat which is carried along by a swift current.

The conflict between Hamilton and Jefferson in Washington's Cabinet resembled a war of races. Boswell once asked Dr. Johnson: "whether he considered Voltaire or Rousseau the more dangerous writer," and the doctor replied: "Sir, it is difficult to distinguish the amount of mischief between them." Dr. Johnson was a strong believer, but if he had lived in Catholic France instead of constitutional England, he would probably have recognized that the French could only be reformed through a process of disintegration, and that

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sceptics like Voltaire and the encyclopædists would contribute more to this end than wiser men could do. Tom Paine was the Voltaire of America and Jefferson its Rousseau. Both of them were useful in their way, though they also did much harm; and Hamilton probably regarded them as Dr. Johnson did their French prototypes. Shrewd historical judges have calculated that if Jefferson had not been absent at the French court in 1787 there would never have been a United States of America at all.

To Jefferson's mind, Hamilton appeared as the incarnation of all that is politically dangerous. His very abilities made him appear so. During the French Revolution every man who made himself conspicuous enough to exercise authority came under suspicion of aspiring to the sovereignty; and this levelling spirit of democracy was not only shared by Jefferson, but by many of the Federalists. Hamilton had no intention of building a house upon the sand, and the vigorous measures which he undertook, to strengthen the government and make its authority respected, were looked upon by his opponents as so many steps for his own advancement. There was no more danger of a *coup d'état* in those days than

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there is at present, but it served as a fine bugbear to a large class of Americans at that time. When Napoleon abolished the feeble French Directory, these Americans were perfectly satisfied that they were right, and that Hamilton, who so much resembled Napoleon, would have done something similar if they had not prevented it. They could not see that it was by giving strength and solidity to the government that Hamilton was preventing the very catastrophe which they presumed he was intriguing to produce.

Washington always supported Hamilton. This fact has not been sufficiently considered. It cannot be said that Hamilton was the government, for Washington was far too strong a character to permit that; but with two or three small exceptions, after listening to different opinions from his Cabinet officers, he always decided in Hamilton's favor. Not only was this the case in regard to Hamilton's financial and economical measures, which were regularly opposed by Jefferson, but also in regard to matters which properly belong to the State department. Hamilton proposed and carried through the Jay treaty with England by sheer force of will and argument; and when the northeastern boundary was under

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discussion he wrote an extensive argument on that subject, considered by authorities one of the finest legal documents of that time.

All this must have been very humiliating to Jefferson, and how he endured it would be a mystery if it were not for a peculiar mental condition of the age. The tendency to hereditary right was so strong in the eighteenth century that the American people took it as a matter of course that the Vice-President should succeed the President, and the Secretary of State the Vice-President. This continued with some intermissions until the administration of the second Adams. The most prominent characteristic in Jefferson's face is tenacity of purpose,—indicated by the fulness of his lower jaw and the double lines about the corners of his mouth. He knew that he was in the direct line of promotion, and that he had only to hold on in order finally to reach the presidency, from which Hamilton was debarred by his foreign birth.

As it was, Jefferson twisted and fretted and continually threatened to resign. No doubt Washington would have been glad to have him do so, but did not like to force his resignation in the face of a disapproving Virginia. The Southern planters were the real aristocrats of

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America. They lived on their large estates with their slaves, hunting and duelling much like the English barons of the fifteenth century. They did not look with favor on Jefferson's philanthropic ideas, but they quickly perceived their own advantage in Jefferson's strong opposition to Federalism, for the last thing they wanted was a vigorous central government which might interfere with them some day. It was the union of the true Democrats of the North with the false Democrats of the South by which the Federalists were finally outvoted.

Men who have not the courage of a lion are obliged to resort to the cunning of the fox. Jefferson's Virginian biographer makes no attempt to conceal his secret machinations against the government of which he was a member. His Virginia and Kentucky resolutions, which have become so noted, simply express the essential spirit of rebellion; but Senator Lodge credits him also with instigating the Giles resolution for investigating Hamilton's treasury accounts. There was no more excuse for such an investigation then than there is now for a similar investigation of Secretary Gage's affairs, and Hamilton sailed out of the storm with flying colors.

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After this failure, Jefferson, by a gift of a government office, subsidized a Frenchman named Freneau to establish a journal in which he attacked Hamilton in the most violent manner. This was more than flesh and blood could stand, and Hamilton proceeded to castigate his adversaries, big and little, in the public prints in a way which they never forgot. He has been blamed for this as beneath the dignity of his position; but a good thrashing was exactly what they needed, and it probably did them a great deal of good. Freneau, if not Jefferson, was the first to introduce the custom of calumniating political opponents in this country,—a practice which finally resulted in the assassination of Garfield.

The most cutting commentary on Jefferson's opposition to Hamilton is that after he became President he found himself obliged to continue Hamilton's policy both in finance and foreign affairs, as it has been continued ever since.

European statesmen have been astonished, not so much at the growth of our republic as at its solidity and internal strength. With a most heterogeneous population and the constant influx of ignorant foreigners the United States government has successfully defied in-

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ternal rebellion and resisted foreign encroachment with an almost magical ease. The secret of this is that Hamilton not only invented the government and set it in motion, but he shaped the policy of the United States, foreign and domestic, so wisely that subsequent statesmen of whatever party have found themselves obliged to follow the lines that he indicated. Clay, Webster, Seward, Sumner, Lincoln, all drew largely from this political Castalian fount. At the beginning of the war for the Union it was said that our cannon were loaded with Webster's reply to Colonel Hayne. That famous oration was composed in a single night, and it was Webster's thorough study of Hamilton's writings which enabled him to do this.

The foundation of the Academy at West Point was recommended by Hamilton. He located the capital of the United States, and so favorably that during the Civil War it saved two States to the Union. He was the first to suggest the use and emancipation of negroes for military purposes. The system which he devised for the collection of the government revenue still continues mainly as it came from his hand. His skill as a financier has certainly never been surpassed, if indeed

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it has been equalled. His assumption of the state debts by the Federal government astonished the whole country. Yet it was not more politic than just, for the obligations of the colonies had been incurred for the benefit of the nation as a whole. Hence it was only right that the whole nation should become responsible for them. He studied political economy to get the juice and throw away the rind. He perceived at once that it was not and could not be one of the exact sciences; that men could not be treated like pawns upon a chessboard; and that the investigations of retired scholars, although valuable, were not always to be trusted in practical affairs. His political economy was based on broad moral grounds. The welfare of the state was his first object, and his measures were suited to immediate conditions. In spite of Adam Smith, he saw it was necessary to protect home industries in order to obtain immigration and develop the vast resources of the country. It is not likely that he would have approved of the Chinese wall that now surrounds it, and which was one of the evil consequences of the Southern Rebellion.

After six years of tireless activity, Hamilton left Washington's Cabinet for the prac-

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tice of his profession in New York, where he quickly became the most distinguished lawyer of his time. Erskine alone might possibly be compared to him. He had no love for public offices, and cared still less for celebrity. He had done his work and left others to enjoy the fruit of his labors. Perhaps he also believed that he could accomplish more for the ratification of the Jay treaty in a private station. The " Camillus" papers which he wrote for this purpose are the finest of Hamilton's political writings and the best study of foreign politics in English or perhaps in any language. He signed them " Camillus" because Camillus was supposed to have rescued Rome from the Gauls, and in like manner he was trying to save America from the Gallomania of that time. Jefferson was unable to persuade Madison to enter the lists against " Camillus,"—a threefold compliment to Hamilton, as Von Holst calls it; but it is probable that Madison was more than half convinced by Hamilton's argument. It was at this time Aaron Burr said: " A man is lost who puts his name on paper against Hamilton."

Only those who love the truth find the truth. Even a cursory reading of the " Camillus" papers brings before us the portrait of a man as

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dispassionate, single-minded, and patriotic as President Lincoln. No one in America recognized the terrible condition of European politics in 1795 as Hamilton did; and while Jefferson, in his blind sympathy for the French Revolution, was ready to imperil the fortunes of the nascent republic in a conflict with giants, Hamilton, the true humanitarian, appears like the captain of a ship who is willing to sacrifice a portion of the cargo in order to ride out the dangerous storm. He expected that war would finally come, and predicted almost the exact time when it did come, but his language is always that of a peace-maker.

This disposes at once of the improbable allegation that Hamilton was so ambitious that he never would be satisfied until he wore a crown on his head. If he had been desirous of usurping the sovereignty, he would have followed exactly the opposite course concerning the Jay treaty, would he not? He would have tried to aggravate the difficulty with the British government, and, having promoted war, would have used his position as commander-in-chief of the army to turn the situation to his own advantage. What Washington declined to accept he might easily have found reasons for accepting. Washington

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evidently considered him a military genius, and he was generally so considered. He gave no support to the popular excitement three years later (which was reasonable enough), and resulted in the declaration of war against France; but when the campaign against Louisiana had been decided on and the command intrusted to him, he exerted himself vigorously to make the movement a success. In both these international difficulties Washington and Hamilton stood shoulder to shoulder and acted the same part.

He uses plain language in the "Camillus" papers concerning his opponents; but in addressing a wide audience it is only plain language that is effective. His sentences resemble Napoleon's in their force, lucidity, and completeness of detail; but they lack the calm repose of Napoleon. His style is swift, nervous, and in places almost hurried, as if his ideas were crowding one upon another. He says on the first page: "It is natural for the bad to hate the virtuous;" a statement as true now as when the Athenians voted to banish Aristides because he was called "the just."

The "Camillus" papers effected their purpose. In spite of the Gallomania the Jay treaty was ratified, and war with England

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was postponed for sixteen years. But this was the last of Hamilton's great successes.

John Adams was to Hamilton very much what William II., of Germany, proved to Bismarck. It may be said of Adams, as Tacitus says of Galba, that every one would have supposed him the fittest person for President if he had never held the office. Hamilton's keen penetration perceived this in advance, and he made an effort to obtain the nomination of a Southern Federalist, and in this way he would also have taken the wind out of Jefferson's sails; but the only result of this intrigue was to embitter Adams against himself. Adams was upright, patriotic, but not magnanimous. If he had made Hamilton Secretary of State he would have given lustre to his administrations, won a strong friend, and probably secured his own re-election. Instead of this, by depreciating Hamilton he belittled himself, and is generally credited with having ruined the Federalist party.

After the election of 1800, Hamilton had an opportunity to show the stuff of which he was made. He had labored zealously for the re-election of Adams, and now he found himself obliged to make even a greater self-denial. The disappointed Federalists intrigued with

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the Burr Democrats for the election of Burr instead of Jefferson. Between Aaron Burr and Jefferson there was for Hamilton not a moment's choice: the former was a visionary but the latter of a thoroughly corrupt nature; and he threw the whole weight of his personal influence in favor of Jefferson. A letter has lately come to light written by Hamilton to one of the Federalist electors * in 1801, urging him to vote for Jefferson so as to prevent the election of Burr. Jefferson owed his advancement to the man he had persecuted, and this act of magnanimity cost Hamilton his life.

It has been said that the duel between Hamilton and Burr did not differ essentially from other duels; but as for that it may be safely affirmed that no two duels have ever been exactly alike. For General Jackson to kill the reprobate who insisted on fighting him may have been a public benefaction; but when a man who knows his own skill takes advantage of the code of honor to force a peaceable citizen into a duel he differs little from an assassin. The wonder is that Hamilton should have accepted Burr's challenge. He would have lost small credit by refusing it, and at the pres-

* Bayard, of Delaware.

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ent time a politician who would challenge his opponent to a mortal encounter would meet with public ridicule. It would seem as if Hamilton might have made Burr appear ridiculous; but in the greatest men there is always an enigmatic quality which defies analysis. The death of a hero always bears good fruit, and the shot that killed Hamilton put an end to duelling in the better portion of America. Neither the death of Washington nor Lincoln called forth more eloquent tributes of national grief.

It is a pity that a biography of Aaron Burr should have been introduced in the series of American statesmen. He was in no sense a statesman, but a reckless political gambler,—a parasite on society. After this time it would seem as if he were pursued by avenging furies. His daughter, the only person who cared for him, was captured by pirates and came to an unknown end. After the failure of his Western secession schemes he wandered from one country to another, bankrupt in pocket and reputation. Finally, one winter night in Boston a near relative of President Adams was informed that a stranger wished to speak to him at the door. He went and found Aaron Burr, who begged the loan of ten dollars with

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which to reach New York City. He died alone in a garret in New York, and when found his body had been partly eaten by rats.*

Hamilton's interest in Miranda, a South American revolutionist, has been greatly exaggerated. People forget that Hamilton came from that part of the world, and that he naturally wished to learn what was going on there. For him to be seen in company with Miranda was sufficient to excite suspicions of foreign conquests.

His advice to Governor Jay to disregard the Constitution in respect to the election of 1800 is a more serious matter. It was revolutionary, and would have tended to bring the Constitution into contempt, but it might have resulted in a salutary change in the method of electing Presidents. To choose a President by Congressional districts would be much fairer than the present system.

Hamilton's character was not as perfect as Washington's or that of Ferdinand of Brunswick; but there is little which can be said against it. His enemies asserted that he was haughty, which in partisan language merely means that, like Washington and Sumner, he

* The first Josiah Quincy was authority for these facts. Johnson's Cyclopædia says he died on Staten Island.

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maintained a fine reserve. Men of popular manners, especially those who seem to be everybody's friend, rarely have good judgment in great affairs, for they live too much on the surface of things. Elbridge Gerry, writing to a friend from the first Congress, said: "Today I called on the Secretary of the Treasury, the celebrated Alexander Hamilton, and found him a plain, kind man." How pleasantly those words sound to the ear,—a plain, kind man. How else can we think of President Lincoln except as a plain, kind man? Senator Lodge, however, pays Hamilton a higher compliment when he says, in reference to Jefferson's assertion that he had been duped by Hamilton in the bargain for fixing the national capital: "It is very doubtful if Hamilton could succeed in duping anybody." His large, open, magnanimous nature scorned the arts of dissimulation by which meaner men rise to influence. He made his way by clear force of intellect and character, and had no need of stratagems and wiles. That North America is not like South America, and that the United States now exists instead of a group of petty republics, is chiefly owing to the genius and foresight and heroic devotion of Alexander Hamilton.

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

PROFESSOR SEELYE, in his small, disparaging biography of Napoleon, speaks of the American Presidents as a "set of adventurers." If he means by this the Presidents of the United States, he is greatly in error. There have been good Presidents and weak ones, capable Presidents and inefficient ones, but not one of those who has been regularly elected to the office can be properly styled an adventurer. Arthur and Johnson might be called adventurers, but it was not intended nor expected that they should become Presidents. It was because Aaron Burr, Stephen A. Douglas, and James G. Blaine were adventurers, that, with all their popularity and diplomatic skill, they never could obtain the position. The people of the United States always reserve to themselves the right of defeating a candidate who suffers from what is called "Presidential fever."

The tendency to hereditary succession was so strong in the men of the eighteenth century that the first five Presidents after Washington were all promoted either from the Vice-Presidency or from the position of Secretary of

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State. With General Jackson, however, a series of popular heroes came on to the stage, most of them good men in their way, but not well fitted either by temperament or experience for the position. De Tocqueville and other foreigners have noticed that no people are so easily captivated by military glory as the Americans, and Presidents Jackson, Harrison, and Taylor were the victors of a single battle. Grant had a long and honorable military career, though perhaps not the most brilliant; while Scott, the conqueror of Mexico, proved an unsuccessful candidate apparently because he was a man of aristocratic manners. Among all these Presidents, from Jackson to Hayes, there was only one who gave distinction to the position, and that one was Abraham Lincoln. The others, however, were not adventurers, but men of good reputation and respected in their professions. It cannot be denied that a large majority of the eminent men and distinguished intellects of America have originated in Virginia and New England, and next to these localities in Kentucky and Ohio. The direct descent of President Lincoln from the Lincoln family, which settled at Hingham in the seventeenth century, has been satisfactorily made out by Samuel

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Shackford, in spite of the denials of Abraham Lincoln's Illinois biographers. The name is common in New England, and in or about 1870 there was a captain of a steamboat on the coast of Maine whose name was Lincoln and whose face resembled that of the martyred President. It is a not uncommon type of a New England face.

Lincoln's grandmother was a Virginian, and he was born in Kentucky; but he was not at all of a Kentuckian in character. The common type of Kentuckian is proud, belligerent, fond of external decoration, even to pinchbeck jewelry, and averse to physical labor. There was nothing at all of this in Lincoln. Even after he became President he was the most modest, unpretending man in Washington. Although fond of discussion and a tireless debater, he hated anything like a personal controversy. He cared little for external appearances, and was a tremendous worker with his hands. He was equally strong in mind and body, and the stories of his rail-splitting are no fabrication. His virtues were those of the old-fashioned New England farmers. He was cool-headed, nonchalant, frugal, industrious, and economical. His wit was genuine Yankee wit, and it was the more conspicuous in Spring-

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field, Illinois, because his associates would seem to have been gifted with little of it. The same kind of wit can still be heard among accidental congregations of men in New England country towns.

Abraham Lincoln's rise in life from the log-cabin to the White House would seem more remarkable if the same thing had not happened to General Harrison twenty years earlier. Henry Wilson, of Massachusetts, is said to have been born under a barberry-bush by the wayside; began life as a shoemaker, read a few law-books, obtained an election to the Legislature, and after a brilliant career in the United States Senate ended his life as Vice-President, and if he had lived longer might have been President also. Nor did this happen on the outskirts of civilization, where the continual influx of immigrants lifts a man who has once been established, like the incoming tide that floats a ship in her dock; but in the oldest, most conservative, and well-settled portion of the country. The truth would seem to be that in a democratic republic it is easier for a man who starts from the lowest round of the ladder to rise in political life than for one who is well educated and otherwise favorably situated; provided only that he possesses real abil-

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ity and a well-balanced character. Classes exist, whether we recognize them or not, and men will always vote for a candidate of their own class, if they can find one available, in preference to those of other classes. The fence-rail that was carried into the Chicago Convention in 1860 may not have been without its influence on the result; and yet the members of that convention were much above the average in character and intelligence. Romantic rises in life are like great prizes in a lottery, and have a highly stimulating effect on the imaginations of those who work for small wages.

Lincoln was no adventurer, but improved his condition in life in an honorable and conservative manner by a steady intellectual effort. There are no dark spots in his record, no political intrigues, no Mulligan letters, nor even the shadow of a domestic scandal. He led an upright life. His great stature and the strength he had gained by swinging the axe made him feared in a community where the roughest kind of self-help was the order of the day. His honesty caused him to be trusted, and it was found as he grew older that he was a person of excellent judgment. With such conditions one can succeed more readily in the

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West than in the East; and it is doubtful if Lincoln's struggle in life was really so severe as Emerson's or many others, of whom we have never heard.

No historical character, except Napoleon, has had so many false lights cast upon him as President Lincoln's, but with this difference, that the character of Napoleon has been distorted by his enemies and that of Lincoln by his would-be friends. His tragical fate was largely the cause of this in Lincoln's case, but it has also been done for political purposes; so that after forty years the real personality of the man is only beginning to emerge from the mythological material under which it has been concealed.

James Russell Lowell was the first to attempt an estimate of Lincoln in an essay in the *North American Review;* but Lowell did not know Lincoln, and was never acquainted with prominent public men who might have informed him about Lincoln. Consequently his essay was mostly a piece of guess-work, and on account of the celebrity of the writer it has attracted much more attention than it deserves.

Something better was to be expected of William H. Herndon, who was President Lin-

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coln's law partner at Springfield; and in Herndon's biography we actually come nearer to the man than in any other life of him. The book, however, is not free from persiflage, and the writer quotes too many remarkable predictions by Lincoln to be altogether trustworthy. Herndon did not see much of Lincoln during his presidency, and accordingly has little to say concerning that most important epoch of his life.

Lamon's biography is very similar to Herndon's, but he does not appear to have known Lincoln so well, and he does not paint so life-like a portrait.

Congressman Arnold, of Illinois, was a superior kind of man; but his life of Lincoln was written too much under the pressure of public opinion and too close to the events which he describes. The book suffers from a lack of frankness.

Nicolay and Hay's biography resembles Carlyle's "Life of Frederick the Great." It is history written for the benefit of an individual. It contains some valuable information from the archives at Washington, but it is otherwise chiefly remarkable for its cynical disparagement of old John Brown,—what Lincoln himself would have called pulling down

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one man in order to elevate another. Their book represents the most aggressive type of Westernism.

With these materials before him, John T. Morse has at length given the world a substantially faithful and impartial account of President Lincoln. It is a pity that he does not better appreciate the position of the old Abolitionists and Freesoilers, who created the movement which carried Lincoln into the White House and whom Mr. Morse always refers to as "extremists;" but so far as Lincoln himself is concerned, he appears like a fair-minded and impartial critic.

Abraham Lincoln has to be considered as a lawyer, a politician, an administrator, a statesman, an orator, and a character.

His course as a lawyer was not over any smooth highway of learning and the practice of elegant oratory, but like the roughest mountain climbing in which he availed himself of every expedient that would give him practical support. Yet he was noted from the first as an honest lawyer, who could give vent to much crude eloquence in a just cause, but always seemed to be hampered by a dubious case. In instances of the latter sort he would attempt to obtain what he could for his

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client by means of a compromise, and failing this he adopted a purely defensive position. All accounts agree to his honesty, his kindliness to widows, and other disinterested work; but also that he was not a well-read lawyer or even versed in the technicalities.* He made every case a study by itself and attacked the problem in whatever way he would be most likely to solve it. Some of his arguments were naïvely ingenious; especially in the case of certain women of a neighboring town who had destroyed a liquor saloon and were sued for damages. Lincoln defended them on the ground that it was an act of self-preservation, and gained his case. He convinced the judges with good logic and entertained the jury with anecdotes illustrating the subject in hand like a modern Æsop. His store of fables was unlimited, and in this respect there was not another like him in the country.

At the age of forty he came to be considered one of the three or four ablest lawyers in his State. He was in Illinois what Webster had been in New England, though in a less degree. Like Demosthenes, he had no natural aptitude for oratory, and, unlike Demosthenes,

* See Herndon, II., 5.

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he found little opportunity to cultivate it. His voice was far from melodious and his tall, lank figure was not well suited to the platform. His features were bony and inexpressive, but the material of which his speeches were composed was often very remarkable, and this leads us directly to the mainspring of his nature. Lincoln was a born artist,—a rosebush growing in a barnyard.

There is something very pathetic in this, when we consider what his early surroundings were and what they ought to have been. The coarse wit, that has been justly enough ascribed to him, was adventitious. It belonged to the Western politician and the circuit lawyer. Lincoln's true nature was refined and elevated. Like John Brown, he developed an internal life parallel with his external, as poetic and beautiful as the other was hard and rugged; and it may have been this contrast between his external life and the ideal within him which caused those periods of sadness which expressed themselves in his face, but which he never explained. Professor Hedge, of Harvard, one of the first critics of his time, once remarked that if Lincoln had happened to turn his attention to literature instead of politics, he would have surpassed all

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American writers, except Hawthorne and Emerson.

The plain-speaking Herndon informs us that Lincoln did not read books thoroughly. He looked into them for special purposes, and, having found what he wanted, threw them aside. Milton, however, was an exception. He read Milton more than Shakespeare, and this accounts for the plain, classic elegance of his style as a writer. There are admirable passages of Miltonic English in his speeches and public documents,—thought as clear as crystal; but none of his addresses have a sufficiently constructive form to be placed beside those of Webster and Sumner. The statements of real value in them are like green islands in the midst of a turbid river. Lincoln's oratory was serious, persuasive, and vitalizing, but it was much like the prairies on which he lived; he never became impassioned, and one can read a long way in his speeches before coming to anything that deeply moves the human heart. It was Wendell Phillips who said of Lovejoy, the first anti-slavery martyr in Illinois:

"How cautiously most men slip into nameless graves, while now and then one forgets himself into immortality!"

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Lincoln's politics were like his law practice, —eminently practical and suited to Illinois life. If he had lived in Ohio he would have been as progressive as Chase, and in Massachusetts as revolutionary as Sumner and Andrew. We may trust that wherever he was, he represented the best elements about him. He was ready to make bargains provided they were innocent, and to subscribe to compromises if they were just. He never troubled himself about political science or European affairs, and it is doubtful if he even read the *Federalist,* which laid the foundation of the United States government. It is much to his credit that, having been lowly born, he should have joined the Whig party rather than the Democrats, for the Democratic party at that period represented the dregs of American politics,—the spoils' system and the superiority of ignorance. Moreover, the Whig party was in a minority in Lincoln's own district, so that this choice could not have been made from interested motives.

Lincoln's admiration for Henry Clay's oratory may have been one cause for this. Clay's speeches do not read like Webster's, but his delivery was perfection, and he was otherwise one of the finest types of an American states-

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man. From the lecture he delivered on Henry Clay, it seems probable that Lincoln took Clay as a model for his own course in political life.

He did not succeed readily, but only after many trials and discouraging reverses. He was neither a Charles James Fox nor an Alexander Hamilton. In all his proceedings he was slow and deliberate, though quick enough at repartee, and woe to the political opponent who attempted to make fun of him. In his fortieth year he was elected to Congress, where he honored himself by voting forty-two times for the Wilmot Proviso, which was designed to exclude slavery from the territories recently acquired by the iniquitous invasion of Mexico.

In connection with this subject, Lincoln said, however, of the revolution in Texas which preceded it:

"Any people anywhere, being inclined and having the power, have the *right* to rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right,—a right which, we hope and we believe, is to liberate the world. Nor is this right confined to cases in which the whole people of an existing government may choose to exercise it." *

* Morse, I., 76.

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In this statement Lincoln recognizes the right of revolution, but fails to define it clearly. On such doctrine not only would the secession of the slave-holders have been justified, but that of any disaffected community which chooses to set up its will against the central authority. I do not feel sure that the people of the United States are the only ones who consider their government to be founded in right and equity, and that all others are radically vicious and unjust. The plain fact was that Texas was filched from the Republic of Mexico by a lot of Southern adventurers, who were supported in this by the national administration. Mr. Morse says that at this time Lincoln was wildly anti-slavery. Exactly what he thought of the Fugitive Slave Law remains uncertain, for his utterances on the subject were doubtless diplomatic. However, he always supported the enforcement of the law, even after he issued the Emancipation Proclamation. This was the serious mistake of his life, for the Fugitive Slave Bill, by suspending the writ of *habeas corpus,* enacted a small revolution wherever it was enforced. The law itself was revolutionary, and if slavery could only be supported by such measures, the republic was doomed, and democracy

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would have to give way to an oligarchical despotism.

Sumner perceived this and proclaimed it boldly; but there is no evidence that Lincoln ever perceived it, and he continued to treat the slavery question on a legal and economic basis, while the country was smoking with the subterranean fires of a great social convulsion. This view of the subject greatly assisted his nomination at Chicago in 1860, but it proved an impediment during his administration. If he felt sympathy for the unfortunate condition of the African, he never expressed it.

Lincoln's reputation with the people of Illinois improved continually, so that in 1854 he became a candidate for the Senatorship,—a more important position than the governorship. Lyman Trumbull, however, carried off the prize, of whom Horace White said that as a political debater he was scarcely, if at all, inferior to either Lincoln or Douglas. He was, besides, a man of stainless reputation.* Illinois was fortunate to possess two such statesmen at this time.

* The writer heard Trumbull deliver a speech on a veto by President Johnson in February, 1866. His voice sounded in the lobbies like the roaring of a lion, and he continued this for full two hours.

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Lincoln would seem to have taken little interest in the Kansas troubles, which proved the first battle-ground for honest labor in the United States. After Lawrence had been burned by the Missourians, Kansas Aid Committees were organized all through the Northern States, and Lincoln was appointed on one of them, but he shortly afterwards resigned without doing much for the cause.

The joint debates between Lincoln and Douglas in 1858 are deservedly celebrated, for never was there a more brilliant fence of argument in America, or perhaps anywhere else. This became the more so since the political platforms they stood upon were so narrow that both parties were continually in danger of falling to the ground from the insecurity of their footing. It resembled a boxing-match conducted on a tight-rope. They were obliged to be debaters and acrobats at the same time. The slavery question in Illinois was narrowed down to its possible extension in the territories. Lincoln was opposed to this, and Douglas only admitted it on such hypothetical conditions as almost to nullify its possibility.

What a contrast they presented on the stage: Lincoln, six feet four inches in height, lean and angular, but always dignified and imperturba-

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ble; Douglas, square and thick-set, with short legs, a coarse bull-dog face, and full of force as a steam-engine. A casual spectator might have felt inclined to laugh, but he would not have laughed long. These debates were argued with such skill on both sides that they are still excellent reading, not as a discussion of the subject, but for the ingenious subterfuges of Douglas and the apt replies and pithy statements of Lincoln. Douglas was the high-priest of American demagogues,—a fountain of misrepresentations and appeals to vulgar prejudices. Tricky was no word for him, and he shifted his ground so rapidly that as soon as he had been answered once he had to be answered again.

Lincoln had the best of the argument, but Douglas carried the election. Trumbull did all he could to assist Lincoln, but a retired army officer at Galena, named U. S. Grant, voted for Douglas. It is also true that Lincoln was secretly opposed by a large number of Republicans because it was evident to the shrewder sort that Douglas was breaking up the Democratic party, just as Blaine did his own party in 1884, and therefore it was better for the prospects of the Republican party that he should be elected to the Senatorship than that

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Lincoln should. Horace Greeley openly opposed Lincoln in the New York *Tribune* at this time, and it is supposed that Seward did so secretly, though wholly from motives of party interest, and the result answered their expectations.

Lincoln's Cooper Institute address, which followed the year after this debate, has attracted more attention in his biographies than it did at the time it was delivered. His attitude in it was a purely defensive one. He did not believe in interfering with slavery where it already existed, and he tacitly supported the Fugitive Slave Law, but he protested earnestly and even eloquently against its further extension. Slavery could never have been abolished by such a policy, but it may have been the most practicable policy for the time being.

The day after Abraham Lincoln's nomination for the presidency, a certain school-boy met R. W. Emerson in the streets of Concord and asked him who Abraham Lincoln was. Emerson replied that Lincoln was an Illinois lawyer and, he believed, an excellent man and popular in his own section, though not well known in the Eastern States. Emerson seemed as much surprised as the boy at Lincoln's nomination.

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When the leaders and prominent members of a political party meet in a national convention, they meet to choose a master; and in such a case they are pretty sure to choose a kind and even indulgent master. Now Lincoln was already known to be one of the kindliest of men; whereas Seward afterwards proved himself as Secretary of State to be obstinate and self-willed, if not domineering.

It was not Horace Greeley after all who defeated Seward at Chicago. Greeley was the ablest editor of his time, but he lacked the tact and stability of character which are requisite for dealing with men. The man who might have elected Seward, but failed to do so, was Simon Cameron. An examination of the first two ballots makes this as clear as day. On the first ballot Seward lacked some forty-four odd votes for a nomination,—almost exactly the number cast by Pennsylvania for Cameron. On the second ballot the vote of Pennsylvania was changed to Lincoln, and on the third ballot he was elected. Lamon informs us that this was accomplished by a direct bargain with Cameron for a place in the Cabinet.* Cameron's character, however, was such that it is

* Morse, I., 169.

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impossible to determine whether this was done for his own special benefit or for the good of the Republican party; for Seward would no doubt have paid an equal price.

The sequel to it is also worth noting. Cameron was made Secretary of War, and Seward took advantage of the defeat of Bull Run and of some rather scandalous proceedings connected with the War Office to have Cameron relegated to St. Petersburg, which was only something better than sending him to Siberia. This indicates sufficiently the influence which Seward possessed in the government at that time.

The day before the nomination, Lincoln had written to his friends in Chicago, "I agree with Seward's irrepressible conflict, but not with his higher law. Make no bargains that will bind me." Now the "irrepressible conflict" meant revolution, and the "higher law" was the right that justified it. If Lincoln's managers made any bargains for him he would of course be bound by them.

After the nomination Seward gulped down his defeat and devoted himself body and soul to Lincoln's election. Wendell Phillips said, in an address after the event was over: "See what magnificent speeches William H. Sew-

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ard has been making in the Northwest! When a politician ceases to be a candidate for the presidency, he becomes a man again." *

There was never a more critical period in the history of a great nation than the winter of 1861. The danger was that the hot-headed Southerners, now stimulated to a white heat by the recent election, would commence hostilities before Lincoln could be inaugurated. This would have been greatly to their advantage, for nothing more unfortunate could have happened for the Union cause. Seward perceived this, and the course he pursued may have been chiefly for the purpose of gaining time. Sumner and the more resolute members of the Republican party stood firm against any concessions. Lincoln supported them; but he said, "I have no objection to giving the slave-holders New Mexico, and I approve of the Fugitive Slave Law when it can be enforced in a decent manner;" that is, without too much opposition. This certainly was a thin varnish of a compromise; others went various lengths.

Efforts for compromise dragged on for two months, and finally ended in smoke the

* The presence of Tom Hyer and other New York roughs, to howl for Seward at the Chicago Convention, can be traced to the instrumentality of Thurlow Weed.

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very night before Lincoln's inauguration. The peculiarity of the situation gave an appearance of weakness to the Republican councils, which did not properly appertain to them.

Lincoln's choice of a cabinet was judicious, but not without peculiarities. That Seward should be Secretary of State was a matter of course, and the appointment of Chase to the Treasury Department could not have been improved; but he also offered a place to Guthrie, of Kentucky, an old Democrat whose reputation had been smirched by his connection with the Kansas frauds of 1855. Fortunately, Guthrie declined, and Lincoln supplied his place by Montgomery Blair, of Maryland, who also could hardly be called a Republican.

Lincoln evidently wished, like Washington, to be President of the whole country; and this was a grand idea, but the time for it had gone by. The nation was no longer whole: it was riven and rent, and could never be made whole again except by force and compulsion. Sumner recognized this, but Lincoln and Seward did not. Moreover, in Washington's time political parties were in an embryonic condition, but now the fine bantling hatched by Jefferson had grown into a vulture full of rage and rapacity. Lincoln discovered a year later by the

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unfriendly treatment of the Kentucky delegation what he had to expect from his political opponents; and if he had taken Guthrie into a cabinet of Republicans he would have caused great exasperation in his own party at the commencement of his administration.

It was also noticed that no Massachusetts man was selected for the Cabinet. It had almost become a custom to do this, and the fact attracted more attention because Massachusetts was not only the source of the anti-slavery movement, but the strongest Republican State in the Union. Sumner, however, was made chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the most important position in the Senate.

No man could have entered on the duties of his high office under greater disadvantages than President Lincoln.

Leaving out of account the revolutionary condition of the country, he was wholly unacquainted with Washington life and knew little of the men with whom he had to deal. For twenty years he had been pleading cases before a judge, but he had rarely acted as a judge himself. By this mode of life he had acquired a wide-reaching mental development, but it was not the development of a practical

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man of affairs. It was rather significant that he had never been a candidate for governor of his own State. He knew nothing of foreign affairs, of finance or military affairs, except what he had read in the newspapers; and these were the subjects which now chiefly demanded his attention. Fortunately, he had a logical mind; but that he should have hesitated, and even vacillated, under these conditions is not surprising.

Nicolay and Hay account for Lincoln's indecision previous to the bombardment of Fort Sumter by presuming a general apathy in the Northern States with regard to public affairs. General Grant, however, has plainly contradicted this by his declaration that after the call for troops to defend the capital had been issued, any of the larger States would readily have furnished the whole quota. There is no truth in it at all.

It was at this time that Seward made his surprising proposition to run the machine himself and to threaten war on France and Spain. This seems more preposterous now than it really was, because we do not know its antecedent conditions. Seward was aware of Louis Napoleon's designs against republicanism in America and hoped to reunite the country

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against a common foe. He felt confident that Napoleon III. would not go to war.

Yet Lincoln wielded a power nearly equal to the Tsar Alexander's, and when the war once began he pursued his object of restoring the Union with the untiring tenacity of a sleuth-hound. He imprisoned the rebellious Maryland Legislature without form of law in Fort McHenry, and the writ of *habeas corpus* from Chief-Justice Taney was entirely disregarded. This and the banishment of Vallandigham were acts as revolutionary as secession itself, but salutary and justifiable. As soon as the President of the United States declares martial law he becomes a Roman dictator.

In regard to the numerous arrests which were made for treasonable purposes in Maryland, Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana, David Davis, afterwards Senator from Illinois, wrote to Mr. Herndon:

"Mr. Lincoln was advised, and I also so advised him, that the various military trials in the Northern and Border States, where the courts were not free and untrammelled, were unconditional and wrong; that they would not and ought not to be sustained by the Supreme Court; that such proceedings were dangerous to liberty." *

* Herndon, II., 266.

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David Davis was no legal pedant, and if we substitute the word "revolutionary" for "wrong" in his statement, the situation becomes clear at a glance.

As a rule, it is best for a man of business never to be familiar with his subordinates; but there is a certain kind of American who can be familiar with his employees and yet maintain perfect control over them, and assert his dignity at a moment's notice. Lincoln belonged to this class of men; there was nobody like him to deal with the great crowd of office-seekers, complainants, and petty intriguers who gather about the White House like the shades on the shores of Acheron in Dante's Inferno. Many of these it would not have been prudent to offend, and Lincoln had a good-humored but effective way of dealing with them, which generally left a favorable impression upon their minds. Some of the best anecdotes of Lincoln relate to these unprofitable interviews.

To a politician that cautioned him against Secretary Chase as a very ambitious man who still had his eye on the presidency, Lincoln replied:

"What you say reminds me of the time when I was driving a mule-team for my father in Indiana. A big black horse-fly lit on one of the mules, and I

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struck at it with my whip, but my father called out to me, 'Don't you hurt that fly: it's the fly that makes the mule go.' Now I take it to be Secretary Chase's ambition that makes him useful to the government."

La Fontaine never coined a fable of more universal application.

To a temperance lecturer who warned him against General Grant as too much addicted to alcoholic liquors, Lincoln said:

"If I only knew the brand of whiskey that he drank, I would send a keg of it to every general in the army."

A Kansas man came to him to apply for a certain office, and used the worst argument that he could have for the purpose,—that is, by disparaging a rival claimant. Lincoln replied to him:

"My friend, did you ever hear the story of *nip* and *tuck?*"

The story is too long to be repeated here, but the amount of it was that "if the other man is not much of a fellow, he is quite as good as you are."

Then Lincoln made an anecdote to the next caller of his own anecdote, and when the office-

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seeker returned to Kansas he found "*nip* and *tuck*" was there before him.

General Grant has perpetuated one of Lincoln's uncouth frontier expressions in the figure: "If General Sigel cannot skin himself, he can hold a long leg while somebody else skins."

So many curious anecdotes and jests have been attributed to Lincoln that it is now difficult to distinguish those that are genuine. His biting satire on homœopathy, however, and on General McClellan for employing a homœopathic doctor, has gone round the world, and its authenticity is sufficiently well proven.

A President who is not a match for the ablest man in the United States Senate soon finds himself and his dignity in a precarious position. If they are able to talk him down, his real authority is at an end. Lincoln could hold his ground against Sumner or Wade as coolly as he might against a local country politician.

The administrations of Washington, John Quincy Adams, and Lincoln were what might be called exemplary. If Washington was rather too conventional, Lincoln may have erred in the opposite direction; but they were both equally just and high-minded. There is no instance of his having practised those politi-

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cal dodges (which have become so common since 1881) either to gain his own reëlection or to subserve the interests of his party; and the flattering parasites, who were the disgrace of Grant's administration, found no encouragement from Lincoln. He had learned what human nature was like in his law-practice, and had no intention of being played upon. Instead of "standing by his friends," he informed them plainly that a person in his position should have no friends. It is as difficult to discover an instance where he seemed to consider his personal interest in other ways.

It is a small item, but well worth noting, that Lincoln never gave an office to his law partner, although Herndon might have filled a first-rate position. His appointments were admirable, and if not always the best that could be had, they were as good as could have been expected in those distracted times. He not only wished to have the tribunal of justice placed above suspicion, but that "its court and all the precincts thereof should be swept clean."

Lincoln, however, was not an Alexander Hamilton,—not a great administrator or political organizer. There has been much discussion on this subject, but the strongest witnesses are not favorable to him.

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First on this list we should place Dr. John C. Ropes, a rarely candid historian, who made the most thorough study of the civil war period. That Charles Francis Adams should have taken this view would not signify much, since he was all the time in England; but we know that Seward stands behind Adams, and even if we suppose that Seward was actuated by jealous motives, this would not apply to Hugh McCulloch, who was Secretary of the Treasury after Chase, nor could it to John Tucker, who was Assistant Secretary of War under Cameron and Stanton. McCulloch stated in print that Lincoln was *not* a great administrator; and Tucker, who was the man always made use of for any sudden emergency or difficult enterprise, was equally plain spoken to his personal friends. Secretary Welles has argued this matter in Lincoln's favor, but his assertion that Seward was continually interfering in the affairs of other departments of government is practically an admission that Seward had the managing hand. Gideon Welles was not highly reputed for sagacity in the American navy, and this was even taken notice of in English periodicals. Chase, Sumner, and Stanton were

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always reticent on the subject of Lincoln's executive ability.

He seems to have troubled himself too much about small matters. In August, 1863, he sent for Morton McMichael, of Philadelphia, to come to Washington and consult with him on important business. When McMichael arrived there he found that the business in question was a quarrel between two Pennsylvania politicians which Mr. Lincoln wished to have adjusted for the benefit of the party. McMichael's reply to him was: "Mr. President, let those men fight. The more they fight the better it will be for the Republican party." Then he asked McMichael what would he think of raising an army of Irishmen and placing them under the command of General McClellan? Morton replied: "I think, Mr. President, that it would be a fine advertisement for McClellan in the next presidential campaign." *

President Lincoln's interference with the plans of General McClellan might serve as a subject for a debating society. There was no real danger that Stonewall Jackson would attack a fortified city with General Fremont's army coming up in his rear. If McClellan's

* This incident was related by Henry C. Carey in presence of Mr. Tucker and others who knew the facts.

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original plan had been carried out, Jackson's communications would have been cut, and his command would either have been captured or dispersed.

Seward and Lincoln's other advisers (excepting Chase) were equally responsible for this fiasco; but in the catastrophe which overtook General Rosecrans's army Lincoln's own hand is plainly visible.

After Gettysburg and Vicksburg the Confederate forces were so much weakened that a vigorous prosecution of the war might have brought it to a timely close. Instead of this, however, President Lincoln detained General Grant in Mississippi to pacify the country and expedite a hasty reconstruction; he permitted General Meade, a purely defensive commander, to dally with Lee in Virginia; and urged General Rosecrans to push into the mountains of Tennessee in order to prepare that State for reconstruction.* The consequence was inevitable. The Confederate government was allowed time to recuperate and its whole force was thrown on General Rosecrans, who was defeated in a bloody and stoutly contested battle. After this Congress passed a

* Morse, II., 163.

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bill creating Grant a lieutenant-general, and placing him in command of all the Union forces, so as to prevent Lincoln from interfering again.

President Lincoln's faults as a statesman evidently arose from preconceived notions. Instead of adapting his plans to circumstances, he endeavored to adapt circumstances to his plans.

Conspicuous in this line was his idea of colonization. He sent for a delegation of the more important colored people and discoursed to them in regard to the expediency of their returning to Africa. They listened to him respectfully, but declined to go. He recurred to this possibility a number of times, but nothing could be more impracticable. Lincoln realized that the black man was a disturbing element in politics, but he did not realize how necessary he was to the cotton planter and the sugar grower. The deportation of the negro race would have caused greater distress than the civil war.

Was it a civil war? It was considered so, but it had all the characteristics of a foreign war. After the Southerners had shed blood and acquired the rights of belligerents, they became practically a foreign nation. If Lin-

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coln had recognized this, he would not perhaps have made those premature attempts at reconstruction which so much embarrassed the Union generals. In September, 1863, the President sent an order to Governor Johnson in Tennessee in regard to reconstruction, to which Governor Johnson replied that if it were put in execution every Union man would be driven out of the State. The President then rescinded his order.*

Lincoln met with many such rebuffs; but the most signal of them was on his final proposition to offer the secessionists three hundred millions of dollars if they would lay down their arms and return to their allegiance. Every man in his Cabinet stood against the proposal, and no wonder. It is much to their credit that they kept silent about it, for if it had been made public, Lincoln's popularity in the loyal States would have been ruined. The plan was impracticable, for Congress would not have granted a penny for the purpose. Further than this, if the offer had been made and accepted, several millions of that money would have been used to carry the next election in the State of New York, and, if successful,

* Governor Johnson showed both the order and his reply to Major Stearns.

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the slave-holders would again have come into power, with all the evils of a counter-revolution.

Lincoln behaved well in the case of the Confederate envoys who were illegally seized upon the steamer *Trent,* but he might have done better. If he had reprimanded Captain Wilkes and forwarded Mason and Slidell to England by the next steamer he would have done what was just and right; he would have prevented the foolish clamor that was made in the Northern States over this small affair, and he would have spiked Lord Palmerston's guns before they were fairly loaded. A statement made by Nicolay and Hay that Seward was at first opposed to the surrender of the envoys is quite incredible and lacks confirmation.*

Hugh McCulloch says, "All contributed to the emancipation." This is only too true. Not only the existing government, but Lundy, Phillips, Garrison, Greeley, Beecher, Lovejoy, Parker, Emerson, and, above all others, Sumner and John Brown, of Ossawatomie. It is an almost universal mistake to suppose that President Lincoln abolished slavery in the United States. He had no power to do it. He

* Morse, I., 385.

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did what he could as the nation's executive, but he did nothing to stimulate public sentiment in that direction, and without the support of public sentiment he would not have dared to issue his proclamation.

Slavery was abolished by a series of measures which began in the second month of the war, and was only completed in February, 1865.

The first of these was Secretary Cameron's order to General Butler to treat fugitive slaves as contraband of war; for which Butler has received more credit than he deserved.

In January, 1862, Senator Wilson introduced a bill for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia with moderate compensation. This was passed and approved. At the same time Lincoln proposed a similar measure to the Kentucky representatives, but they did not receive his advice in a gracious manner.

In May of the same year Congress passed a law authorizing the Union generals to confiscate the slaves of rebels and make use of them for military purposes. Shortly after this Sumner introduced a bill as a supplement to it for the organization of negro regiments. This legislation would have emancipated the slaves as fast as the rebellious States were subdued.

Lincoln's proclamation was substantially a

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summing-up of previous measures, and it gave them a solidity and force which they otherwise would not have had. He wrote the first draft in June, but at Seward's suggestion he deferred its publication until September. Meanwhile he acted regarding it as if he were afraid that some one would steal the credit of it from him. He informed his Cabinet at the outset that he intended to issue it, whether they liked it or not; and when a delegation of Chicago clergymen called on him in August and urged him to issue it—not being aware that it was already written—he treated them in an unfriendly and not very gracious manner.*

When they informed him that they felt divinely inspired to appeal to him for the liberation of the slave, he replied substantially that he did not consider divine inspiration to be limited to their profession, and that he believed himself as capable of becoming the recipient of it as they were. The reverend gentlemen may have understood the meaning of this after the proclamation was issued, but they could not possibly have done so at the time.

The final proclamation, issued on January 1, 1863, excepted from its operation six States

* Morse, II., 118.

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containing above a million of slaves. It was based on military necessity and the dictatorial power of the President. Nothing was said in it of the moral or ethical character of the act until Secretary Chase suggested this and wrote out the eloquent passage in which it says: "By doing justice to the black man we insure freedom to the white," or words to that effect.

Finally, late in January, 1865, Congress enacted a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery forever within the boundaries of the United States. The President did not wholly approve of this, because it did not allow compensation for the slaves of loyal owners. There may have been some loyal owners, but they were very few.

Lincoln's real talent was of the forensic order. Give him an argument, and he was at home in it. Many of his efforts in this line are models. His explanation to the public in regard to the arrest and banishment of Vallandigham was an admirable statement. Casuists might discover pinholes in his logic, but it was enough to satisfy any reasonable person. His messages to Congress have a dignity, a plainness, and directness very rare in that class of documents. Matthew Arnold considered Lincoln a sagacious man, but lacking in distinc-

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tion. He seems to me to have achieved a higher distinction in literature than Matthew Arnold. His Gettysburg address is one of the poetic gems of history, and is likely to live as long as any literature of the nineteenth century. Improve upon it, you cannot.

The connection between Lincoln's assassination and the play of "Julius Cæsar" is startling. Wilkes Booth had acted in that play a number of times, and on one occasion he became so excited in the part of Cassius that the other actors are said to have been afraid for their lives. He was a bad actor and a wild, disorderly fellow.

It is a pity that the performance of "Julius Cæsar" cannot be interdicted in this era of assassination. All the anarchist brotherhood find strong support in Antony's final apostrophe to Brutus, "This was the noblest Roman of them all." What an encouragement to crime! So far from being the noblest Roman, Brutus was the most contemptible of all his race; and Dante has shown a more just appreciation of his character than Shakespeare by placing him on a level with Judas Iscariot.

According to Herndon, the religious views of Lincoln were similar to those of Sumner, Parker, Emerson, and all the American *literati*

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of that time. He believed in God and immortality, and beyond that he held no very definite religious faith; nor did he consider it wise to hold strict opinions on subjects concerning which we can know and understand so little. It would not be possible now to nominate such a man for the presidency.

In Morse's biography of Lincoln we find the following:

"Since white men first landed on this continent, the selection of Washington to lead the army of the Revolution is the only event to be compared in good fortune with this nomination of Abraham Lincoln." *

Lincoln was certainly one of the best men of his time, and a great figure in those days; but there is no good reason for supposing that he was exceptional in the sense that Washington was exceptional in 1775. He was not a great party leader like Seward, nor a great legislative statesman like Sumner, while Chase combined the best qualities of either without quite equalling them in their respective lines. Herndon considers Trumbull very nearly equal to Lincoln in forensic power, and his character as a man still remains without a

* Morse, I., 171.

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reproach. When Trumbull entered the Senate Douglas was shorn of his terrors in debate. If either Chase or Trumbull had been nominated in 1860, the result might have been much the same that it was. We might not have had Lincoln's Gettysburg address, but they might have infused greater energy into the administration of affairs. The style and manner of the two men were suggestive of this.

It would be difficult and hardly advisable to compare Lincoln with Washington; but this at least may be said. It is true that Lincoln carried on war on a vastly greater scale than Washington, but he had also vastly greater aids and advantages. He never suffered from the lack of men or money. The governors of the States supplied the one; Chase and the bankers the other. Neither was the capital of the country seriously in danger at any time during Lincoln's administration. He never met with an experience like Washington's winter at Valley Forge; nor was he obliged to withstand a severe shock of public opinion, like the Francomania of 1794. Although Lincoln's administration was a stormy one, he was not tested at any time by the severest shocks or great vicissitudes of fortune. It may also be affirmed that it is difficult to separate Lincoln's

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acts historically from those of his Cabinet. His administration has to be taken as a whole.

There are few figures in history which stand before the mind so clearly and sharply defined as Washington. He has become a type, a rare type, of human excellence, and will remain so to future generations. He occupied the two highest positions that are possible in any nation, —the general of its armies and its chief executive; and he filled them both in such a manner as to excite universal commendation. During fifteen years of public service he not only committed no blunders, but made no conspicuous errors of judgment. A serious mistake on his part during the war of independence would have imperilled and might have proved the ruin of the American cause. He has not been inappropriately styled the father of his country; and if Lincoln did not equal this, he can at least be considered one of the noblest of her sons. He served as a balance-wheel to all the conflicting and divergent forces of the civil war.

Lincoln was in fact a government of checks and balances all in himself. He was a restraint upon Seward's centrifugal tendencies; checked the hasty rushing of Fremont into a premature emancipation, and McClellan from an equally dangerous reactionary policy. The tactful

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manner in which he continued to preserve cordial relations with both Sumner and Seward, who were always in antagonism on national politics and often at variance in regard to foreign affairs, is illustrative of Lincoln's general method and deserving of the highest praise. In a period of the greatest public excitement he ever preserved a cool judgment and gave to revolutionary acts an appearance of legality which was sure to have a salutary effect on that large class of persons who do not understand the revolutionary principle. It was at least fortunate that he was nominated at Chicago instead of Seward, who sometimes appears before us like a clear-sighted statesman and at others like a reckless political gambler.

He was a unique man; but to designate him, like Lowell, as the first of all Americans is radically vicious in itself, and even carries with it a suspicion of partisan insincerity. It was after all neither Lincoln nor Grant that suppressed the slave-holders' rebellion, so much as the industrial classes of the Northern States, who were determined, cost what it might, that slavery should be abolished, that labor should henceforth be respected, and that the laborer should be assured of a compensation for his toil.

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THE WINTER OF 1861.

In 1871 Prince Bismarck established a professorship for the study of the constitutional history of the United States at Strasburg, and Herman von Holst was appointed to the chair at the suggestion of Dr. Frederick Kapp, author of "The Hessians in America," and for many years secretary of the Prussian parliament. Such was the origin of Von Holst's "History of American Politics," and in considering the work we should also recollect the object which Bismarck had in view in founding the Strasburg professorship. Von Holst's first volume, however, which treats of the opposition of Jeffersonian democracy to establishing the national government, is altogether the most valuable portion of his lengthy work; and, although he does not view the subject with the eyes of an American of our own time, it is all the more instructive for that reason.

His first volume is in a manner complete in itself, for the second does not follow it exactly in chronological order; and it is evident that his writing the history of the anti-slavery

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movement was an after-thought. This does not differ essentially from other histories on the same subject, written from an anti-slavery stand-point; and it is generally admitted that down to the year 1859 it is an interesting and fairly satisfactory work; yet it is not devoid of certain peculiarities which seem to have the character of personal prejudices.

It is surprising that in his account of the rise of the anti-slavery movement he has said nothing of the Lovejoy meeting in Boston, and of the acquisition to the cause of Dr. Channing and Wendell Phillips. What an advantage this was to the anti-slavery cause! Channing was the most distinguished clergyman of his day, and Phillips's impassioned oratory, if it did not convince the old, had great influence upon the young, which at that time was much more important. While the *Liberator* was read by hundreds, Phillips's fearless utterances were listened to by thousands. Yet Wendell Phillips's name does not appear anywhere on Von Holst's pages, excepting in two foot-notes in the last volume. A history of the anti-slavery movement without Wendell Phillips is like the play of "Julius Cæsar" without Antony.

In regard to Webster, he makes some excel-

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lent points, but evidently does not realize the value of his reply to Hayne as a constitutional statement, nor the influence which it exercised on the fortunes of the republic. As Senator Hoar has said, when the war for the Union began our cannon were loaded with Webster's reply to Hayne.

Von Holst does Sumner better justice, but he treats his great speech on the "Crime against Kansas" in rather a caustic manner, and is more amused by Sumner's classic quotations than impressed by the strength of his argument and the seriousness of the occasion.

These, however, are the only points of disagreement which I find to complain of in the first four volumes of his history, though others might discover different objections. So far he has given a fairly just picture of United States politics; but in his last volume he becomes too censorious,—does not represent the grand march of events which culminated in war like the fifth act to a tragedy, but dwells long and painfully on the futile attempts of individuals to arrest the progress of forces which no human agency could control. He would seem to have forgotten the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions, on which he laid so much stress in his first volume, and which,

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handed from generation to generation, had come to be a political gospel, which the slaveholders believed in more devoutly than in their religious faith. It was the doctrine that every man owed his service to his native State in preference to his country, which was hurrying them on to destruction, as if they were all on an express train with a misplaced switch in front of the engine. It is erroneous ideas that cause the great calamities of history.

Neither does Von Holst seem to realize that it was non-coercion and faith in the Jeffersonian maxim, that the right to govern depends on the consent of the governed, that paralyzed the hands of loyal men of both parties. They were sworn to obey the Constitution, but they also believed in the Declaration of Independence; and if all persons were born free, how could they be justly constrained to obey a government which was odious to them? * With such political principles, a weak man like President Buchanan appears like the ass between two bundles of hay; but the type included also strong patriotic men like Corwin and Adams. Yet Von Holst blames these persons individually instead of explaining the difficulty under

* Few Americans yet realize that the Declaration of Independence is a revolutionary document.

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which they labored. In the winter of 1861 the stanchest Union men were the so-called idealists, like Sumner and Greeley, who considered the chief object of government was to enact justice. Von Holst gives them no credit for their firmness; but he praises Lincoln for protesting against compromise, although Lincoln handicapped this by supporting the Fugitive Slave Law, which was itself an impracticable compromise.

His chapter on John Brown's invasion of Virginia is one of the best in the volume, though it shows in places a tendency to hedge, as if he were writing for two readers of different opinions. Julian Hawthorne once said of Thackeray's *Colonel Newcome,* that he was the finest type of a gentleman in fiction, and that his narrow-mindedness only made this more conspicuous. In like manner, John Brown's heroism appears more conspicuous from his desperation and lack of foresight. Von Holst appreciates this, as well as the moral grandeur of his prison life and execution, but he weakens his statement by separating Brown from his Eastern friends. John Brown, taken by himself, was much, but more with the background of Theodore Parker, Dr. S. G. Howe, Emerson, and John A. Andrew, who stand forth as

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an expression of the highest thought and finest culture of modern times. Von Holst cannot plead ignorance of this, for Parker, Emerson, and Howe were much better known in Germany or England than the names of many of our Presidents.

Neither has he taken notice of the enthusiastic John Brown meetings which were held in Brooklyn, Boston, Salem, and other places; but he has not neglected to mention an opposition meeting held in New York City, at which Charles O'Conor pronounced a sort of funereal panegyric on slavery. He refers to the fact that the United States Senate appointed a committee to investigate the Harper's Ferry raid, and then leaves the reader in darkness as to the result of this investigation, for that would bring him upon ground which he has determined not to cultivate.

The same reason may explain why he does not credit Sumner, King, Wade, Wilson, and others, who firmly opposed compromise in 1861, and finally defeated both Crittenden's compromise and the propositions of the Peace Congress. He had no excuse for neglecting to do this, for I provided him with conclusive information on the subject long before his final volume went to press. Sumner was the recog-

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nized leader of this minority, but altogether they formed the backbone of the Republican party during the Civil War. They did not flood the halls of Congress with patriotic eloquence, because they knew how to make their force felt in a more effective manner.

Seward had repeatedly predicted a peaceable settlement of the slavery question, and had ridiculed the idea of secession, because it was for the interest of his party that he should do so. How far such a man really believes what he says, it is impossible to judge; but now Seward was compelled to face a condition of affairs to which he could not very well blind himself. There were all shades of opinion in regard to compromise among the Republicans and border State representatives; but they can be satisfactorily divided into three classes. There were those, like Sumner and Lincoln, who believed that compromise would be prejudicial to the true interests of the nation; those like Crittenden, who believed that the salvation of the United States depended upon compromise; and between these two classes there were those who felt little faith in compromise, but who thought an effort ought to be made in that direction, and were ready to support the attempt. How was Seward, as a party

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leader, to unite these various elements in a common cause? That was the problem of the hour.

Quite contrary to this, Von Holst judges of Seward's course in the winter of 1861 precisely as Sumner and his friends judged it. One would suppose that he had been talking with Sumner's old friends. I do not feel sure that they were in the right. There was more of the fox than of the lion in Seward's composition, and, as the parliamentary leader of his party, he was in a different position from Sumner. Let us suppose that Seward's main object was to have Lincoln safely inaugurated before hostilities commenced, and his whole conduct becomes intelligible. He plays with compromise as a cat does with a mouse, only to gain time until the Republican party shall come into power. It is here that Von Holst shows himself the unpractical professor. Buchanan was President only in name, and no greater misfortune could have happened than that war should have begun under his auspices. It might have resulted in Lincoln's being inaugurated in Philadelphia.

What makes this view of the case seem more probable is that after the inauguration Seward was firmness itself. He refused to negotiate

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with the rebel commissioners,* and this was what precipitated the war; he overpowered General Scott when Scott stood in the way of energetic measures; he had General Meigs promoted in spite of the Secretary of War, and he had Fort Pickens re-enforced in spite of the Secretary of the Navy. No wonder if Gideon Welles complained that Seward's chief business seemed to be interference with the other departments.

Whether Seward's policy was the result of deliberate foresight or arose from the tact of the practical politician who adapts himself to the varying conditions of public events, it certainly resulted very fortunately, for valuable time was gained, and the rebellious States were placed in a position of absolute responsibility before the civilized world for whatever might follow. The only danger lurking in this policy was that the slavocracy might accept the peace propositions held out to them by the Republican leaders; but Seward had his spies in the South and knew the temper of the people there.†

* At the same time he coquetted with them unofficially, and appears to have deceived them in regard to his real intentions,

† The Southern editors had much to say about this, and they were not far wrong. I afterwards became acquainted with one of Seward's spies, who was living in his old age at Atlantic City.

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In his celebrated speech of February 2, Seward said: "I have thought it my duty to hold myself open and ready for the best adjustment which could be practically made;" but he also said, "If this Union is to stand or fall by the force of arms, I have advised my people to do as I shall be ready to do myself—to stand in the breach, and stand with it or perish with it." These two sentences sufficiently indicate Seward's position.

The superior moral tone which Von Holst discovers in the Western States reminds us of the enthusiasm in Kentucky for the War of 1812—because it was the farthest removed from danger. The slave-holders were heavily indebted to merchants and bankers in the Eastern cities. We have no wish to discredit the true manliness of the Western Republican, but among masses of men material interests commonly have the greatest force. We have never heard that any one State in the Union surpassed the others in courage or patriotism, and some of the bravest officers of the war came from the city of William Penn.

A considerable portion of the volume is expended in a sort of wrangle over George T. Curtis's "Life of Buchanan," a book that was not much approved of, even by the old Web-

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ster Whigs. The best that can be said for Buchanan is that he was remarkably well suited to his situation. If he was pusillanimous, the government was not less impotent. He had no army with which to repress rebellion and no authority to enlist troops. There were no appropriations for the purpose, and his Cabinet was in a continual state of dissolution. He was a President without a partisan. His Southern supporters had seceded and his Northern supporters had gone over to Douglas. That he neglected to garrison the Southern forts and made no effort to stem the tide of rebellion is perfectly true.

Von Holst says (page 399):

"But to escape civil war was impossible, no matter what was done or not done." And in the same paragraph:

"And conversely, the sooner it was demonstrated by deeds that the Federal government was terribly in earnest in its resolve to suppress the rebellion, the shorter in all probability would be its duration and the less the sacrifice of blood and treasure."

These two statements are in a manner contradictory, for if the war was bound to come, a premature suppression of it could only have resulted in its breaking out again at the first

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convenient opportunity. As George L. Stearns said, the defeat of Bull Run was the first step towards the liberation of the slave.

The close of the volume, however, is worthy of a great writer. He says, page 459: "When the Confederacy forced the sword into the unwilling hand of the North to fight for the Union, it compelled it at the same time not to lay it aside until it had destroyed slavery with it; for in the very nature of things the destruction of slavery was a precondition of the restoration of the Union."

This is what James Russell Lowell would have called the gist of the whole matter. There is no talk of secession in the Southern States now. Lowell saw it; Sumner, Chase, and Andrew saw it; but whether Lincoln and Seward realized this is not certain.

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SOUTHERN RECONSTRUCTION

NATIONS are made by rivers and separated by mountains or the sea. Egypt was made by the Nile, Assyria by the Euphrates. Germany was formed by the rivers running northward from the Alps, and France by those running eastward from the Jura and Vosges, which separate the two countries. North America is naturally divided into four geographical habitats: the Atlantic coast, the Pacific coast, the Mississippi basin, and the St. Lawrence basin. The necessity of trade communications with Europe, however, binds the central portion of the United States to the eastern portion by an indissoluble tie; and the southwestern States are bound to the northwestern by the great waterways which traverse them.

On the contrary, there is no essential connection or political relationship between the St. Lawrence basin and the United States territory. Canada may become annexed to the United States if the Canadians ever desire it, but the mouth of the St. Lawrence is the military key to all British America, and it is not

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likely that the British government would surrender it without a hard struggle.

It is a significant fact that the States which seceded from the Union in 1861 should have chosen for the name of their government the Confederate States of America. It seems almost like a parody on the name of the United States. The question might have well been asked, Why should two nations with the same name substantially, and constitutions almost identical, exist side by side with purely artificial boundary lines between them? The fact would seem to indicate that the separation was not to be permanent.

Every great national catastrophe can be traced back to a prominent individual who embodies the evil spirit of his time. Louis XIV. made the revolution of 1789, although it was not Louis XIV. alone, but the support which he received from the French nobility also, that brought about the catastrophe. In like manner, Calhoun was the evil genius of the American slave-holder. Instead of being misunderstood, the evil he did has not been sufficiently appreciated. He formulated a creed of self-justification for the class to which he belonged. That soon came to be a gospel of political faith. His dictum that there could be no half-way

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between African slavery and negro equality seemed to be a clear deduction from the Declaration of Independence, and was devoutly believed in by the Southerners as well as by the Southern sympathizers at the North.

Even Seward's "masterly foreign policy" was infected with this peculiar notion of the peculiar institution. In his correspondence with Minister Dayton he expressed an anxiety lest the emancipation of the slaves should prove disastrous to the cotton industry, which was then the most important of American products. Subsequent events have proved this to be a delusion.

What Calhoun left out of his alembic was the element of change. It is only a dead language which does not change: it is only a dead people, like the Arabs or Hindoos, who do not change. The nineteenth century was a revolutionary epoch which has caused immense changes. Calhoun perceived this as Metternich perceived it, but he was mentally unfitted for adapting himself to it. The true statesman rides upon the storm and does not fear a tidal wave.

Garrison and Phillips were called fanatics, but the true fanatics lived south of Mason and Dixon's line. The slaveholders of that time

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felt towards the rest of the world very much as the Ulstermen feel towards the rest of Ireland, and Calhoun was an Ulster Irishman by descent. They realized that the sentiment of mankind, that the spirit of the age, was against them; and it exasperated and embittered them. They found themselves isolated and continually thrown back on their own resources. A problem which they could not solve continually stared them in the face. This bound them together with the strongest of ties, and explains why they fought so desperately for an institution which it was their true interest to be rid of. They called this sentiment "honor," but it was more like a religion. To the very close of the war they refused to accept compensation for their slaves. They preferred to die.

In considering United States history during the middle of the past century, this fanatical spirit must always be taken into account, for it was a highly dangerous element. Besides this, we should remember what Calhoun neglected to consider, that the negro race was constantly improving by its association with the Anglo-Saxon.

The American Indian, so-called, remains what he was when the Pilgrim fathers landed. Civilization has had no influence upon him, and

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presumably never will have. He is a useless commodity, and is disappearing because he is useless.

The reason of this is because the Indian does not recognize the advantages of living as white men do. Neither has he any well-defined religious feeling, without which it is impossible to hold civilization together. Negroes, on the contrary, imitate the white man wherever they come in contact with him; and though this sometimes makes them appear ridiculous, it is a favorable augury for the future of the race. Besides this, they are capable of strong religious feeling, and in the exemplification of Christian humility, and the forgiveness of injuries, they are unequalled. Sumner predicted that they would finally inherit the tropics, and when we recollect what the Anglo-Saxon was like fourteen hundred years ago, this seems quite possible.

When we consider that in addition to this there were in the year 1861 thousands of slaves in the United States who were very nearly white, it is not surprising that the moral sentiment of the Christian world should have found a subject for commiseration in American slavery. Neither were the fugitive slaves assisted and protected in the Northern States

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altogether from sentimental motives. It was quite as much because they appealed to the Northern conscience as human beings in distress. The Southern planters honestly believed that slavery was essential to their existence as a class; but it was not slavery, it was the negro. As a freedman they cannot control him so well as previously, but he is much less trouble to them. If he does his work badly, he can be discharged, which is much pleasanter than having him whipped; and if he takes his own leave, it is not like losing a thousand-dollar bond.

The conspicuous mistake of Seward's foreign policy in 1861 and 1862 was his encouragement of the belief that if the slaves were liberated they would leave the plantations and take to the woods, like their progenitors in Africa.* When they obtained their freedom they remained quietly and peaceably, for the most part, where they were. They made no attempts to revenge themselves on their former tyrants, but offered to work for them at as low wages as they could subsist on.

The white man is also necessary to the black man. That is why President Lincoln's at-

* Bancroft's "Seward," II., 333.

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tempt to colonize Ile à Vache with freedmen did not succeed. Five hundred African negroes would probably have been able to sustain themselves there by the same methods which they employ in their native habitats; but American negroes had long since lost the savage instinct without acquiring the constructive faculty of the Anglo-Saxon. As a consequence, they sickened and died in large numbers, and the survivors had to be brought back to the United States.

A more difficult problem than the reconstruction of the Southern States after the close of the war has never been considered by legislators, and the American people were certainly fortunate in having it solved in a manner as favorable to the conflicting interests involved as it has been. It cannot be said now that one section of the country is more loyal than another, and all sections feel the vital importance of sustaining the national government, as the fountain-head from which radiates all the streams of prosperity.

One of the chief difficulties in dealing with reconstruction of the Southern States was the lack of any historical precedent which could be applied to them. All other great revolutions in modern times have taken place within mon-

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archical governments, and could only be considered from that stand-point. Moreover, the various rebellions against government in France and England and Germany have had no localization, like the insurrection of the slave States, and after their suppression there was no danger that the rebellious elements would obtain possession of the government by peaceable means. Now a lawyer without a precedent is a lawyer without a case, and a large proportion of our legislators at Washington—especially Fessenden and Trumbull—found themselves nonplussed by the fact that reconstruction to be dealt in an effective manner would have to be treated on purely *a priori* or revolutionary ground; and that is ground which no lawyer willingly treads on. It was a case wholly outside of the Constitution of the United States and without a parallel in history.

No wonder that President Lincoln declared, in his last speech at Springfield, Illinois, that he had a more difficult task before him than Washington had, and how he could accomplish it without divine assistance he did not know. A man of bolder nature might not have felt like this, and might have afterwards fallen in the same pitfall that Seward did; but it has been

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the common opinion, especially at the South, that if Lincoln had lived reconstruction would have been accomplished in a much more satisfactory manner than in the way that it happened to be. There can be no doubt that it would have been accomplished more readily, with less friction and without the incipient afterbirth of rebellion known as the Ku-Klux organization; but it is also doubtful whether the result would have been essentially different.

Seward and Johnson always insisted that in the course they pursued in regard to reconstruction they were simply following the path which had been pointed out by Lincoln. This was purely political clap-trap. It is evident from Lincoln's speech at Springfield, as well as from his last address from the steps of the White House, in which he suggested universal amnesty united with universal suffrage,* that he had not yet arrived at any decided opinion on this momentous question. It would not have been like Lincoln to act otherwise. Moreover, Congress would have to be considered, and the subject was eminently a legislative one. During serious civil disturbances the President, as commander-in-chief of the army, be-

*Or, according to another account, general amnesty with qualified negro suffrage. See Pierce's "Sumner," vol. iv.

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comes practically a dictator, and Lincoln was fully justified in arranging a temporary reconstruction for those States which had already submitted to the Federal authority; but after the war had ended, these could only be considered as temporary structures, which were to be replaced by the more substantial and enduring forms of legislative enactment. It was not according to American institutions that reconstruction should be dictated by a single person, although Seward would evidently have liked to do this.

The charm of Lincoln's policy lay in his conciliatory methods and readiness to adapt himself to fresh situations. There never has been a time in the United States when public opinion ruled as it did during his administration. Such a President would not be likely to enter into a conflict with his own party.

Seward had already shown his hand in Trumbull's hasty and imprudent attempt to admit Louisiana to a representation in Congress on the basis of one-tenth of its voting population. That a majority of the Republican members of the Senate supported the bill shows how strong the current was against negro suffrage at that time; but its passage was prevented by Sumner in a herculean effort

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of speech-making which has no parallel for copiousness and endurance.

It is difficult to account for Seward's tergiversations during the war, except on the ground of animosity towards his former associates. Even those who supported his nomination at Chicago fared no better than the rest. When we consider his proposition to make war on France and Spain in order to reunite the two sections of the country,—an old Machiavellian trick,—we can hardly blame the best men in the Senate for considering him a dangerous person in his position. Whether Andrew Johnson's sudden change of attitude in the spring of 1865 was due to Seward's influence can never be decided with absolute certainty; but it coincided exactly with Seward's recovery from the injuries he sustained by the fall from his carriage. Their plan of reconstruction might simply be called unconditional surrender. As Wendell Phillips said, the North could only be justified for conquering the South on condition that it carried its ideas into the South, and so made the whole country a homogeneous union.

On May 31, 1865, George L. Stearns and other Boston merchants called a meeting in Faneuil Hall to discuss the question of South-

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ern reconstruction. The principal speaker on that occasion was Professor Theophilus Parsons, of the Harvard Law School. In an able address, which even reminded his hearers of Webster's oration in the same hall, he made the following argument:

"Let us now, fellow-citizens, look at the dangers which attend an immediate restoration of the rebel States to the exercise of full State authority. Slavery is the law of every rebel State. In some of these States free persons of color are not permitted to reside; in none of them have they the right to testify in court, or to be educated; in few of them to hold land, and in all of them they are totally disfranchised. But, far beyond the letter of the law, the spirit of the people and the habits of generations are such as to insure the permanence of that state of things, in substance. If slavery should be abolished in form, their spirit and habits, their pride and passions, will lead them to uphold their oligarchal system, built upon a debased colored population, and intrenched behind State institutions, over which the nation cannot pass in peace. Their personal relation with the colored people as masters over slaves being changed in law, they will look upon them in a new light, as a class to be feared, and as the cause of their defeat and humiliation. They will not tax themselves to give to the freedmen an education. They will not permit the continuance within their States of philanthropic agencies

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for colored people, from the free States. They will not encourage Northern immigration, with systems of small freeholds and free labor; nor will capital and labor go there from the free States under present auspices. Returning to their old arts of politics, which they are fond of, and in which long practice has made them expert, they will seek to repudiate a debt incurred for the suppression of their revolt; nor can we shut our eyes to the danger of political combinations, to be ruled by this oligarchy and to do its work. It is useless to suggest or conjecture methods and means; the spirit and motive will take such forms as occasions may require."

And again he said:

"We cannot require the rebel States, if we treat them as States, to adopt a system, for the sole reason that we think it right. Of that, each State, acting as a State, must be the judge. But in the situation in which the rebel States now are, the nation can insist upon what is necessary to public safety and peace. And we declare it to be our belief that if the nation admits a rebel State to its full functions with a constitution which does not secure to the freedmen the right of suffrage in such manner as to be impartial and not based in principle upon color, and as to be reasonably attainable by intelligence and character, and which does not place in their hands a substantial power to defend their rights as citizens at the ballot-box, with the right to be educated, to acquire home-

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steads and to testify in courts, the nation will be recreant to its duty to itself and to them, and will incur and deserve to incur danger and reproach proportioned to the magnitude of its responsibility."

This address with accompanying resolutions was circulated broadcast over the loyal States, and its effect was all the more potent from the fact that Professor Parsons had never been identified with the anti-slavery movement, and was a distinguished legal authority on practical affairs.

Sumner, Chase, Wade, and Greeley had already given an opinion in favor of universal suffrage for the negro, without educational conditions, requiring only that he should have a local habitation. They supported this, first, on the ground of natural right; secondly, as a political necessity, and, thirdly, because an educational suffrage would require from ten to fifteen years to develop it under the most favorable conditions.

In his valedictory address of January 5, 1865, Governor Andrew elaborated a plan of reconstruction which resembled Professor Parsons's statement, with some additional details of his own. He advised maintaining the direct authority of the President over the lately rebellious States until the Southern people

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should of their own accord repeal the ordinances of secession, repudiate the Confederate debt, and enact a suffrage law which would place whites and blacks on an equality, with a reading and writing limitation; providing, however, that no persons already possessing the right to vote should be disqualified.

This is the reconstruction of the future; but at that time it involved two serious dangers. In the first place it was questionable whether a policy which might be protracted through three or more presidential terms could be adequately sustained during such a length of time. A new generation would be growing up in the loyal States, who might misunderstand the character of the war period, and there would most likely be a clamor for a final settlement of the Southern question at each presidential election; in the second place, according to this plan, the Southern whites might precipitate reconstruction, and afterwards prevent the negroes from voting by physical violence, as actually happened twelve years later.

Sumner perceived these objections and argued the case with Andrew, so that it produced an estrangement between them, which has commonly been attributed to more personal reasons.

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Andrew Johnson was properly responsible for the Ku-Klux outrages,—a heavy weight of sin for a man to take out of this world,—but in one respect his policy was an advantage. It forced the Northern voters, as well as their representatives, to realize the danger that might result at that time from a change of administration.

The Republican party had accepted the responsibility of maintaining the Union, and this included a solidification of the disorganized elements after secession had been suppressed. It was the first truly national party since the disbandment of the Federalists, and its interests were almost identical with those of the nation. The founders of the national Constitution never imagined that the election of a United States President might be decided by the Pope at Rome; but if the Pope has never done this, it is not because he lacked the power to do it. The large foreign or semi-foreign population, irresponsible and unpatriotic, in a State whose material interests are pretty evenly divided between free-trade and protection, is always a source of danger to the republic. The votes of Irish, German, and other persons of foreign birth may be cast on the right side or on the wrong, but they constitute

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an unsettled and dubious element, which can only be secured by demagogic methods.

It has rarely happened that a great and especially a sanguinary revolution has taken place without being succeeded by a counter-revolution. Even the overthrow of imperialism in France narrowly missed this result, and it was only the sudden death of Louis Napoleon that prevented a second restoration. At the close of the war, the Southern States were completely exhausted, and the Northern States were nearly so; but the recuperative power of nature is so great that a nation can go to war one year in five without feeling any serious loss of life or property. In 1869 Seymour carried the State of New York against Grant, and it was said at the time that, if the Southern States had been reconstructed according to Johnson and Seward's plan, Seymour would have been elected. What would have been the consequences of this it is impossible to estimate; but it would have required a different President from Pierce or Buchanan to have held a straight course between the contending elements so as to avoid bringing on a conflict. The responsibility that rested on the Republican party was a very serious one.

The net result of a counter-revolution might

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have been what has been called Mexicanizing the government. We came nearer to this in the disputed election of 1876 than is generally supposed. Three hundred thousand armed men offered their services to Samuel J. Tilden, and expressed their readiness to place him in the White House at any cost; but Tilden said, "No; I will not have one drop of American blood shed to make me President,"—a declaration which will always be remembered to his honor. Occasional revolutions are beneficial,—even those in France have indicated a distinct advance on each occasion; but a chronic condition of revolution, like that of Mexico for forty years previous to the French occupation, is enough to stunt and deform all national growth. In fact, the French occupation appears to have produced good results in teaching the Mexicans that there was an outside world to be considered, and from which there was also somewhat to be learned.

It would be impossible to reason with those who condemn the acts of Congress on reconstruction from partisan motives; but for others who now consider negro suffrage a permanent failure, it would be well to study the evolution of this subject through the Congressional debates from February, 1865, until the

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winter of 1869. It is safe to assert that no other measure has ever been so thoroughly discussed, debated, sifted, and examined from every point of the compass. The open debates upon it in the Senate and House only represented a portion of the consideration that was given to it. Many who had opposed it strenuously at first afterwards came to the conclusion that it was the only possible remedy or resource for existing conditions. Sumner, who had always been the leader in the movement, was greatly respected for his knowledge in public affairs and purity of motive, but he did not possess the influence of a party leader like Seward or Clay, and he would not have made use of personal influence if he had possessed it.

The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution was passed in the last week of December, 1866. It resembled Governor Andrew's plan without the educational qualification, and it offered the recently seceding States a representation in Congress according to the number of their white population, or a full representation provided they conferred suffrage on the negro race. This seemed to be fair, and it was hoped that the Southerners would think best to adopt negro suffrage, by which they would obtain a much larger representation than they

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possessed before the war. The Southerners, however, did not look at it in that light. They preferred to wait and take their chances of a more favorable solution. Not a single State accepted the proposal, and the Fourteenth Amendment became practically a dead letter.

After waiting a year to be satisfied of this, Congress took up its laborious task to be begun again. There was more counselling, more discussing, and more debating. Finally, only a few weeks before President Grant's inauguration, the Fifteenth Amendment was passed, enacting universal suffrage without distinction of race or color. Sumner had won his triumph, —perhaps the greatest of his life.

It has frequently been claimed by Sumner's opponents in his own party that this result was chiefly due to the perverse and eccentric course of Johnson and Seward. If the Amendment had been passed by Congress two years earlier, there might be some justification for such a statement; but it is difficult to see how Johnson could have affected the action of Congress just as he was going out of office. If Congress was influenced by any such consideration, it is more likely to have been owing to General Grant's reticence. As late as the summer of 1867 no person in Washington could say defi-

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nitely what Grant's politics were. He voted for Buchanan in 1856, and no one knew whether or how much his mind had changed. He was thrust upon the Republican party as a presidential candidate by the grand army of veterans, supported by the popular weakness for military renown; but men like Sumner, Whitelaw Reid, and Trumbull did not like this, and predicted unfortunate consequences from it. His reticence indicated great reserved force, but it was much to be feared that this force would take an eccentric direction. It was one of the dangers which had to be provided for.

The Fifteenth Amendment had this essential merit: it was in accordance with professed American principles. This was Sumner's main line of argument. If those principles are correct, negro suffrage must be right and just. The Amendment, however, was not adopted on this account so much as for reasons of expediency. It was the only method by which a loyal party could be built up in the Southern States.

Negro suffrage proved a failure, as universal suffrage always will prove a failure wherever the illiterate outnumber the educated. It was more of a failure than Irish

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and German suffrage in New York City, only because it existed on a larger scale. The administration of Governor Moses in South Carolina was not so bad on the whole as that of Tweed and his Tammany associates, and hardly more corrupt than the national administration at the same time. A great wave of corruption and public demoralization swept over the country at that period,—an aftermath of the Civil War. It was the time of the Erie frauds, the Credit Mobilier scandals, and Blaine's "Mulligan letters." Burglars were employed to steal documents that compromised the highest government officials. It is true that Grant made little effort to repress this; but it is doubtful if the evil could have been repressed altogether. The negroes are an imitative race, and while such conditions prevailed at Washington, what could be expected of Governor Moses and his recently liberated supporters in Charleston?

The negro franchise does not appear to have done much harm except in South Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida. In North Carolina, where the negroes are a good deal mixed with a population of white laborers, it appears to have worked very well. In Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts the colored popula-

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tion has proved an element of stability. The negroes are not socialistic,—not given to strikes or other organized attempts to interfere with the natural process of supply and demand. They are all Protestants, and do not complicate politics by the introduction of religious questions. It is equally true of negroes and Indians that where they come in contact with an orderly, law-abiding class of whites, they are also orderly and law-abiding; especially if the whites are more numerous than they are; but where the contrary happens, they become reckless and criminally inclined. In Philadelphia, where there is a large negro population, there is much less disorder among them than among persons of foreign descent.

The brief supremacy of the African race, from 1870 to 1877, was like a seven-years' war to the Southern whites; for they not only suffered in their pride, but in other respects; but it served to give the negroes a foothold in the struggle for existence and self-improvement. It enabled them to obtain land and to establish the rudiments of an educational system, and it is to be feared that they would not have obtained these without it.

Sumner's championship of negro equality has been badly misunderstood. He was not a

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socialist or a communist, nor did he believe in absolute equality among white persons. What he wished to accomplish in this respect was to have the African race treated with fairness and decency. He met Alexander Dumas at a dinner-party in Paris, and he did not see any good reason why Frederick Douglass should be excluded from similar entertainments in America. He advocated this cause on general principles as the only practical method of accomplishing his object. His Civil Rights Bill, which did not become a law until after his death, served its purpose for the time being; and, although it was afterwards pronounced unconstitutional by Chief-Justice Waite, it is by no means certain that it was so. Caleb Cushing, who had a superior reputation as a legal authority to Waite, held the opposite opinion, and there is no good reason for believing that he was prejudiced.* The Civil Rights Bill helped to break down old barriers and greatly ameliorated the public status of the black man.

Slavery having been abolished, new and adequate relations between white men and negroes at the South have not yet been established, and

* Pierce's "Sumner," iv., 582.

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we live in a period of confusion. This, however, cannot continue indefinitely, and there are hopeful indications for the future. Individuals of the African race have been highly educated, and are diligently transmitting their knowledge to the masses of their own people. They have their own doctors, lawyers, and clergymen. They are represented in the legislatures of the Northern States, and the time is coming when they cannot be excluded from those in the Southern States. They own thousands of square miles of land, and, although the amount is small compared with that which the whites possess, it is fully equal to the proportion of land owned by the farmers in England. In 1903 the taxable property owned by the colored people in the State of Georgia alone was increased by more than a million dollars. If the wages they are paid are less than those of the laboring men in the North, it is also less expensive to live in a warm climate. They are making an effort to obtain education under disadvantages that might well discourage the most energetic and persevering Anglo-Saxons. The colored students have done what has not been done since the days of Abelard; they have built their own academies with bricks of their own making and with timber of their

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own hewing. Hundreds of applicants are turned away from Tuskegee College every year from lack of accommodation; although new buildings are constantly being added. If the criminal statistics of the negro race in the South are somewhat startling, it should be remembered that they live in the most lawless portion of the civilized world, without anything that can properly be called a police force, either to protect the virtuous or to restrain the vicious.

The three Southern colleges, at Hampton, Va., Berea, Ky., and Tuskegee, Ala., are as successful as any educational establishments in the United States, and are perhaps accomplishing more for the future good of this country than any others. The colored people have found a true statesman in Booker T. Washington, who like a modern Moses has pointed out a path to them through the Red Sea of their many difficulties. He counsels them not to trouble themselves about politics, or their social status, or the higher branches of education; but to lay a solid foundation in the old Anglo-Saxon virtues of industry, thrift, economy, and sobriety—to make themselves skilled workmen, to become good housekeepers, and to accumulate property. This is the true basis

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of civilization, and it would be well if there were more such instructors in the Northern States as well as the Southern. It is far better to learn a few things well and thoroughly than to skim the surface of all the branches of knowledge in the way that is now being done in American schools and colleges. If the colored people hearken to their Moses, and profit by his example and guidance, it may be safely predicted that they will in due course reach their promised land, not in the Ile à Vache or any distant continent, but in the very region about them, where peace and prosperity await them as honest and well-behaved citizens.

The sooner the Southern planters realize that the true interest of the negro is also their interest, and that when they cheat him of his lawful wages they are also cheating themselves, the sooner will new and satisfactory relations between the Anglo-Saxon and the African races be established. At the present time the essential need of the colored people is a simple common-school system, in which they can be taught to read, write, and cipher, and a more extended development of the industrial system of Tuskegee College. The greatest need for all parties concerned is a more efficient police and judiciary system.

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THE ETHICS OF WAR

I WAS once acquainted with a mercantile gentleman, in most respects a sensible and practical person, who never went to the polls on election day to vote, because, as he affirmed, governments supported war, and for one man to kill another in battle was just as wicked as Cain's murder of Abel. If any one attempted to reason with him on the subject and show him that governments maintained armed forces in order to preserve the peace, to prevent anarchy, and to protect him and his countrymen in their daily pursuits, he would smile with as much incredulity as Emerson may have done when informed that the day of judgment was close at hand. In important affairs, he would say, people always consider their own interest; and if it were not for the interest of Beaconsfield and Gladstone to make war they would not have done it,—referring to the Afghan and the Egyptian campaigns.

This is only an extreme example of an opinion which prevails largely at the present time, especially in England and the United States, and more especially among the social-

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ists of all countries. It has even taken the form of an aggressive movement like the temperance agitation. You will hear it said with some asperity, and perhaps by a young lady of fashion, that wars are unnecessary and might easily be avoided; that they result from the intrigues of cabinets and ministries; that military preparation naturally tends to produce them; and that the soldiers who fight in them and die on the battle-field are the last persons to derive a benefit from their results. Even General Sherman, sincere and sagacious as he was, believed for many years that our Civil War was occasioned by intriguing politicians in both sections of the country.

There is a kind of truth in all this; but it is less than a half truth, and could never satisfy those who seek for the causes of human actions and volitions.

In the phosphate beds of South Carolina are found fossil sharks' teeth larger than the teeth of a mowing-machine; and naturalists have estimated that the monsters to which they belonged could not have been less than one hundred and fifty feet in length, and must have required at least four hundred pounds of fish for their daily consumption. Why did nature create such engines of de-

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struction? There must have been a reason for it.

The flying-fish feeds on smaller fishes, and these prey on the still more diminutive marine life; the dolphin eats the flying-fish, and the shark eats the dolphin. From the most primitive forms of animal existence up to the lion and tiger there is an unbroken chain of destruction; and thus does God feed His creatures on one another. Perhaps the best explanation—certainly the most rational one—is that only in this way could the balance be preserved between the animal and vegetable kingdoms and the final evolution of harmonious conditions be attained on earth. We may readily suppose that the cannibal habits of the shark tribe were first induced by the lack of other forms of nourishment; so it is with men —in the South Sea islands.

When a farmer puts his cows to pasture he considers whether the grass is sufficiently grown to sustain its roots for the ensuing season. If he pastures too many cows in the same field, not only do the animals suffer, but the turf also will be impaired for another year. If graminivorous animals were permitted to multiply without restriction, they would soon exhaust the vegetation which they live on. If

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the smaller birds did not eat insects, the insects would destroy the foliage of our trees; and if the insectivorous birds were not in their turn devoured by hawks and owls, they would exterminate the insects. It may be suggested that nature might have avoided all this by limiting the reproductive power in both plants and animals, but the reproductive power is so closely connected with nervous volition that it is only by the exercise of reason that it can be controlled; yet nature shows a kind of foresight in this direction also, for animals that have slight means of protection, like rabbits, multiply rapidly, while the white-headed eagle lays only two eggs in a season. The reproduction of plants could only be regulated by human agency. Out of a thousand seeds, some hundreds might sprout or only a few.

The advent of men on earth introduced reason and order. Reason was the divine bequest, by right of which he took possession of this mundane sphere. The primitive man was and is more of an animal than a rational being; the French revolution proved that a large proportion of men in the most civilized communities are still in a barbarous state, and that they only conform to the usages of society from fear of the law; yet in the earliest times man

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showed his evident intention of ruling the earth. He destroyed beasts of prey and domesticated those animals which would be useful to him. Horses and dogs were domesticated long before the earliest records. The reproduction of plants was regulated, grain was sown, and weeds rooted up. The reproduction of animals was regulated by drowning puppies and slaughtering the young of sheep and cattle. That this was right and good, few besides the vegetarians will be likely to question, for through the killing of some others were given an opportunity to live.

Man found more difficulty in dealing with his brother man; and this difficulty still continues. In his dual nature of an animal and a rational being he was sometimes one and sometimes the other, and when he persisted in being an animal he had to be treated like an animal, and even sometimes to be killed like an animal. Such was the origin of capital punishment, and such is its justification.

It has been said that tragedy results from a higher intelligence being placed in the power of a lower one. This, somewhat indirectly, is the origin of war, which might be called tragedy on the grand scale. In order to punish offenders against the general peace in a

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small community, some kind of organization was necessary. If coercion is inseparable from government now, it must have been of continual necessity in primitive society. Doubts must sometime have arisen as to the guilt of the delinquent and the justice of the punishment, and when this happened in the case of a conspicuous personage, the community would be likely to be divided by a difference of opinion for and against, and a kind of a civil war would take its rise. In all the important civil wars of history the right and wrong of either side has been pretty evenly balanced,—like the Wars of the Roses, which originated in the garden of a London law-court.

As soon as communities improved in civilization, they must also have increased in size and wealth. A military organization became necessary in order to protect them from the rapacity of their more barbarous neighbors; for the conquest of a barbarous people was a small advantage to those who were more civilized, and the reverse of this is equally true. That military organization frequently resulted in unjust wars and in the oppression of peaceable communities did not prevent it from being any the less necessary and indispensable.

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Moreover, the jealousy and suspicion between different tribes and races prevented the extension of civilization by any other means except foreign conquest. It was from the conquest of the Hebrews by the Egyptians that the early books of the Bible came to be transmitted in writing.

The history of the Hebrews is an admirable illustration of this subject and differs little from that of every noble race that has given its best blood to the cause of progress and enlightenment. There never was a more peaceable people, and yet they were engaged in continual wars. Originally a roving Assyrian tribe, the biblical tradition that they went to Egypt to escape a famine is likely enough to be true. In Egypt they learned writing, sculpture, architecture, and civil administration. It is more than probable that they acquired an intimation of immortality from the profound respect of the Egyptians for their dead. But their spiritual deity had no place among the Egyptian gods, and to realize this in national form they fought their way to the only land where they could found durable institutions,—the valley of the Jordan, midway between Egypt and Assyria. We learn from two verses in the book of Exodus that every

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Hebrew man carried a sword, and the worship of the golden calf excited a civil war among them which caused the loss of a thousand lives. Their old chroniclers give little or no explanation for the wars which they waged with neighboring tribes. These were accepted as a matter of course, for it is not likely that the newcomers occupied the fertile plains of Palestine without the use of force. Joshua was a fighting man.

The Trojan War is a famous instance of what must frequently have occurred in those ill-regulated times when two allied communities went to war on account of an important fugitive from justice. Poetry gives the truth of human nature, but not of history. The abduction of Helen was properly considered by the Greeks as an international outrage, and yet the Trojans seemed to think her justified in deserting her husband. More common were the instances of warfare where self-interest and chivalrous feeling conjoined to restore an exiled prince to his hereditary dominions. In ancient times there was more chivalry than self-interest in such adventures, for little could be gained by them save a temporary alliance. The attempts to restore the Bourbons, which led to the wars of Napoleon, were of a more

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mercenary character, and it does not look as if the experiment would ever be tried again. Yet there may be more of principle in such political movements than appears upon the surface.

It must be confessed that long-continued peace and the cultivation of the arts has an enervating effect, and the only antidote to this is a strict military organization such as they have in Prussia. The best period of Egyptian civilization came between four thousand and twenty-five hundred years before the Christian era. At the close of that period they were conquered by an Asiatic race of nomadic character, possibly Arabs, but more likely to have been Tartars, who ruled them for the next seven or eight centuries, as we learn from their designation as shepherd kings. Before this conquest, besides their magnificent architecture, the Egyptians made statues more lifelike than any that the Greeks produced previous to the Persian wars. Their savage conquerors not only brought this fine epoch to an end, but would seem to have destroyed the germs of progress in the Egyptian people, for, after they again attained national independence, their art degenerated into the gigantic mannerism by which it is generally known,

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and their political importance declined with it until Cambyses subjugated them in a day.

In like manner the rude Dorians well-nigh extinguished the Ionian civilization in Greece, and it was five or six centuries before the noble Ionian race recovered itself again.

The same danger exists at the present time. Ernest Renan warned Napoleon III. of it; and at the Berlin Congress of 1878 Prince Gortschakoff made a protest to the powers against permitting the sale of repeating fire-arms to Tartar tribes in the heart of Asia, where, as he said, "millions of barbarous men, the finest soldiers in the world, if they once became organized under an able leader, might destroy civilization itself." English opposition prevented the adoption of this prohibitory measure; and there is no likelihood of any immediate peril from the Tartars, but it is no wonder that the Russian Premier uttered this warning against the race.

In the middle of the thirteenth century an army of Tartars, numbering hundreds of thousands, conquered China, India, Russia, and Poland; only when they reached the Elbe did they encounter any serious resistance. Nothing saved Europe at that time but the

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military discipline of the Middle Ages. The King of Bohemia was slain, with nearly thirty thousand German soldiers; but they inflicted double this loss on their half-naked opponents, and the Tartars decided not to go any further in that direction. They maintained their conquest of Russia, however, and exacted tribute from the Russians for two hundred years. This accounts for the arrested development of the Russian people during the Middle Ages, and also for the present form of the Russian government, which has been favorable to the extension of the Russian Empire, but not advantageous to the Russians themselves.

Professor William D. Whitney, in his "Book on Language and the Study of Language," tells us that the Russian language is the vehicle of civilization to Northern and Central Asia; and those who have read Vambery's "Travels in Central Asia," written some six years before the Russian occupation, must realize that even Russian despotism is a beneficent dispensation to the cruel tribes of "Independent Tartary."

The self-complacency of the present age may not differ essentially from the self-complacency of other times, but it is a dangerous mental condition which, like a haughty spirit,

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goes before a fall. We hear such expressions as "the invention of gunpowder has forever excluded the possibility of another conquest of civilization by barbarism." Has the invention of gunpowder made the American Indian less or more dangerous to the frontier settlements of the United States? At all events, the Russians are not to be blamed for protecting themselves, and although they would seem to have overdone this, that is according to the inevitable tendency of human nature and a growing people.

Napoleon said at St. Helena, "Beware of the Cossack." The rapid growth of Russia in the last two hundred years has only been surpassed by that of the United States. Metternich also took notice of this as a serious political fact. During the Seven Years' War the Russian government maintained an army of about a hundred thousand men; now it could easily muster a million. Governments, like other corporations, merely consider their own interest and take little thought concerning the interest of others. A statesman who considers both sides of a subject is commonly looked upon as unpractical, and is always in danger of being replaced by a more narrow-minded man. It is often difficult enough for

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a government to do justice within its own domains, and outside of that generally impossible. Party passion, commercial greed, and a false patriotism, which should be called national vanity, have frequently hurried governments or ministries against their will into injurious attacks upon their neighbors' possessions. Gladstone received a most ungrateful return for his high-minded treatment of the "Alabama" claims,—a large portion of his own party repudiated him for it,—and his surrender of a few unimportant islands to Greece brought even greater obloquy upon him.* Political parties are no more to be trusted than dynasties; and the republican government that stands in a fair and honorable light one year may be smirched by a covetous expediency the next. It is only fear of the law that prevents a large portion of mankind from committing crimes and misdemeanors; and it is only the pressure of external forces which in the long run will restrain a government from overstepping its boundaries. Where strong, vigorous nations are crowded together as they are in Europe, it

* He wished to sue his opponents for libel, but the lawyers warned him that no English jury could be trusted with his case.

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is only political foresight and prudence which can prevent them from going to war.

This is why semi-civilized Russia is so dangerous to Western Europe. Since the time of Nicholas, the Russians have been fortunate in a succession of peace-loving Tsars; but the tide may change at any time, and a military genius on the throne of the Romanoffs might have a terrible effect on European politics. If the English are afraid of Russia, there is still more reason why the Germans, why the Austrians should fear her. If the Russian government maintains an army of a million soldiers, Germany and Austria have to support not less than six hundred thousand apiece, and France quite as many. What will be the final evolution of the immense armaments and increasing public debts of Europe is a problem for a long-headed thinker; but at present there appears to be no remedy for them. The more profoundly we study history, the more evident it becomes that human affairs, generally speaking, must be as they are, and could not very well have been otherwise.

I think it has been hereby proved sufficiently that military organization was intended originally and fundamentally for the protection of civilization against barbarism; but if there is

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need of further argument, it may easily be obtained in the history of ancient Greece. Next to the Romans, the Greeks were the finest soldiers of antiquity, and yet, with insignificant exceptions, they never attempted to make conquests. We have the statement of Thucydides that there were no serious wars in Greece for at least five hundred years before the Persian invasion, excepting the two Messenian wars; and yet, when the Persian invasion came, the Greeks were in such good fighting condition that they completely defeated an enemy of four times their own number. It is probable enough that there was plenty of fighting and skirmishing in Greece previous to that time which we hear nothing about, and, though this may have been an evil itself, it helped to protect the Greeks from vastly greater evil.

That military preparation does not necessarily tend to produce war becomes evident from the following computation: I think it will be admitted that Prussia is the first military power in Europe, and that no other nation has developed the science of warfare to so high a degree. It was the same in the eighteenth century; and yet, if we reckon the number of wars in which Prussia has been en-

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gaged during the past hundred and fifty years, we find it much less than that of other great nations. Commencing with the Seven Years' War, the Prussians have made in that time sixteen campaigns, occupying rather less than thirteen years; the English and French have each made about forty campaigns; the Russians and Austrians about thirty; while the United States of America has been at war fully twenty-three years, if we include the colonial period. It is well known that Frederick the Great preserved peace in Central Europe from 1762 until 1783, and the present German government may be credited with an equally pacific influence. The geographical position of Prussia is not especially favorable to a policy of peace and independence, but rather the reverse.

The genesis of a war is the most interesting of all historical studies, but modern historians have devoted little more attention to this line of work than the old Hebrew chroniclers. It too often happens that a historian sacrifices what he honestly believes to be the truth, and represents an international difficulty in a light as favorable as possible to his own government. Immense mischief is done in this manner, and quite as much by the superficial prac-

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tice of telling half truths instead of whole ones.

At a recent university celebration the orator of the day, after attacking Cæsar, Frederick, Napoleon, and other great generals, made the statement, which might occur to any one, that in a war between two nations one of the parties at least must be in the wrong. At the first glance this would seem to be true enough, but a deeper insight into the working of politics shows us that in many instances the apparent right and wrong of a war or rebellion are so nearly balanced that the contending parties are not to be blamed if each believes itself in the right and the other in the wrong; and, as a matter of fact, in nearly all wars both parties do believe this. If a man thinks he is in the right, it is the same to him whether he really is so or not, though it may not be the same to others.

Let us consider, for instance, the war of separation of the American colonies from the British government. The occasion of that revolution was the imposition of new and unusual taxes by the British Parliament, and nothing is more likely to stir up rebellion than such a measure. The taxes were light and not unjust in their way, for if all other subjects

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of the crown were obliged to pay similar dues, it would seem only fair that the Americans should bear their portion. It was a strong point for the Americans, however, that they never had been taxed except for their own local governments, and they considered it illegal to be taxed by a parliament in which they were not represented. The English press replied to this that there was a first time for everything; that the Americans ought to pay for military protection; and that America was too far away for practical representation in the British government. To this the Americans replied that they were fully able to protect themselves, and if they were too far off to be represented in Parliament, the British government was too far away to regulate American affairs in a judicious manner. What precipitated the conflict was the presence of the British troops, which made the colonies feel as if they were no longer a free people.

Beneath this argument there was a strong undercurrent of conviction among the colonists that the time had come for Americans to administer their own affairs, and that the British government could no longer be trusted to deal with American interests. Such wars as this, the wars of Napoleon, and the war of the Long

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Parliament in England, seem more like great convulsions of nature than affairs directed by any human agency. The wars of Edward III. in France and of Louis XIV. in Germany seem to have been the result of personal ambition; yet they may have resulted from the existence of an expansive force in England and France which could not be easily controlled. The great problem of government is always how to give occupation to an increasing population. The Opium War of 1842 is certainly a blot on the history of England, and so is the Seven Years' War on that of France and Austria. The last was caused by the envenomed resentment of two villanous women, the Pompadour and the Tzarina Elizabeth, against Frederick the Great. There are many who place President Polk's invasion of Mexico in the same category.

Even intelligent persons are easily blinded by preconceived theories of politics or morals. Hay and Nicolay, in their encyclopædic biography of Lincoln, condemn John Brown's Harper's Ferry invasion on the ground that in a *republic* all reforms should proceed according to law and order. Doubtless all reforms under any sort of government ought to proceed according to law and order if possible, but as

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a matter of fact private attempts at reform and popular revolutions have always been more frequent in republican institutions than under other forms of government, because republicans are more independent and more likely to take the law into their own hands. How many revolutions have there been in Mexico and the South American republics; and are we to suppose that all these were without cause or reason? Indeed, has it not been decided that Lincoln's emancipation proclamation was issued contrary to constitutional right? If the right to liberate the slaves was vested in any branch of the government, it was Congress and not the President that had the power to do it; and this was the course of procedure pursued by the English government in a similar case. John Brown's invasion of Virginia was certainly contrary to law and order; but it is becoming a recognized historical fact that all popular revolutions are preceded by similar outbreaks, which sometimes take one form and sometimes another, and have a decided value in preparing men's minds for the coming struggle and in bracing them up to meet the occasion.*

* See my reply to Hay and Nicolay in Von Holst's "John Brown."

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It is as the hand-maid of revolution that war becomes a civilizing force. There are those who consider all revolutions unnecessary, and believe that the world would be a great deal better if it once should subside into a stereotyped Chinese condition. Being fossilized themselves, they have no desire to return to a life of which they are only slightly conscious; and there is no occasion for us to consider them. Revolution is a word never to be spoken lightly, rarely to be thought of; but political revolutions are indispensable to social progress, and Americans, at least, will not be apt to deny this, for had they never occurred, we should be merely appendages to European nations.

Neither have peaceable revolutions heretofore proved to be of much effect: the separation of the South American colonies from Spain would seem in accordance with peace principles, and what has been the result? a string of small republics stretching from Guiana to Patagonia, without stability at home or influence abroad. It was the conflict against the British government which welded the Anglo-Saxon colonies together and gave a manly, vigorous character to the true American. Only those lessons reach the heart of human nature which are learned by

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heart,—lessons written in fire and inculcated with self-sacrifice. The revolution of 1848 in France was comparatively peaceable, but it only resulted in a great sensational confusion; while the counter-revolution of the Bonapartists placed Louis Napoleon on the throne, where he would have remained until death if he had only let Bismarck alone. Meanwhile the Prussian people fought out a sanguinary struggle for constitutional government in the streets of Berlin, and won it.

Most of the wars that have taken place during the last fifty years have had a revolutionary character, and few will deny that their result has been favorable to progress and civilization. The separation of the Southern from the Northern States in this country might not have been so great an evil to the latter as it would have been to the former. Both whites and negroes are much happier and better in every way now than they were in the days of master and slave. How could Italian unity have been realized and the Italians liberated from Austrian tyranny but for the Franco-Austrian war of 1858? The war between Russia and Turkey in 1877 did not result so much to the advantage of Russia as to those smaller states,—Bulgaria, Servia, and Roumelia, for they thus escaped,

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after centuries of humiliation, from the degrading despotism of the Turks. The Russian ladies who served in the Bulgarian hospitals, or the French Zouaves who stormed the hill of Solferino, would have scoffed at the idea that European soldiers are food for powder.

The most remarkable instance of this kind, however, was Bismarck's war against Austria in 1866, by which the vanquished obtained even greater advantages than the victors. It was much for Prussia to gain the territory that separated the two divisions of her nation; but Austria not only obtained a constitutional government, which the people at Vienna especially longed for, but was also released in this way from the tyrannous *concordat* with Pius IX. At the same time the Hungarians obtained the quasi-independence which they so eagerly desired, and the Venetians were restored to their beloved Italy. It was the one thing needed in Europe. Even the campaign of 1870 resulted in a republican government for France, though, it must be admitted, at rather an exorbitant price.

The recent war in China illustrates how impossible it sometimes is to prevent these collisions of nations. The secret of that war is to be found in the recesses of the Chinese char-

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acter, of which, thus far, Christian races know but little. The *émeute* which preceded it was a conservative revolution in favor of idolatry, and the only choice left to the great powers was either to suppress it by force or to abandon all intercourse with the celestial empire, and this would be more unfortunate for the Chinese than for other more civilized nations.

The truth is that there are problems repeatedly occurring in human affairs which can only be solved in this manner,—Gordian knots which have to be cut by the sword. Emerson, who was a better logician than some of his commentators, understood this fact when he wrote:

> "Let war and trade and creeds and song
> Blend, ripen race on race."

America is a witness that it is only by conquest that races can be fused together; as, for instance, the Saxons, Normans, and Danes in England. Battle-fields represent the acme of human concentration and develop the noblest qualities of heart and mind. The Prussians say it does every man good to be a soldier. Even their poets and artists say this; and the American public is not far wrong in its admiration for military genius, for nothing is more rare than the strength of character and intel-

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lectual power which are required to make a great general. To be wise in one's study is not always easy, but to be wise in a great emergency is the most difficult of all things.

It may fairly be asked in this connection how we are to distinguish between a sound, healthy peace and one which is like a house built of rotten timber? No rule can be given for this; it must always remain a question of judgment. Nothing is more difficult than to do enough and not to overdo, and yet we are constantly obliged to make the attempt. So it is in politics; and perhaps the best test of a revolutionary movement is the character of the men who are concerned in it. From the time that the French Republicans discarded Lafayette they went rapidly to the worse. It may also be affirmed that when a revolution repeats itself, as in the case of Julius Cæsar and Augustus, it is founded in the inevitable order of events and could not be prevented. We do not hesitate to condemn Shay's Rebellion, and the Whiskey Rebellion which was put down by Washington, because they originated in mean and sordid motives; but the Sepoy revolt in India accomplished much good in a horrible way, although it was suppressed. Life is a perpetual conflict, and as this conflict deepens,

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so that great numbers range themselves on either side, war naturally results. As Goethe says:

> "He alone deserves his freedom and his life
> Who daily conquers it in strife."

This is the solution of the principles of population, of the survival of the fittest, and of many other problems in moral and political science.

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APPENDIX

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A

The tyranny of democracy is frequently exhibited at town-meetings,—especially those in the suburbs of large cities. I will give two instances of this tyranny out of a large number that have come within my range.

Mr. S., a philanthropic gentleman in the town of M., suddenly died. Next to his estate there lived a man, named W., who kept a trotting park,—a low, brutal fellow, who coveted a piece of avenue belonging to Mr. S. which passed by his land. Soon after the death of Mr. S. the trotting-park man applied to the town authorities to lay out this piece of avenue as a public road, on the ground that he wished to build cottages on his own side of it. This they did, although W.'s land was unsuitable for building, and their action was ratified in town-meeting,—every respectable person in the community voting against it. No cottages were ever built on the avenue, and the affair was practically a transfer of property from one person to another.

A citizen of New York, Mr. P., owned an estate on the Hudson River, in front of which there was a row of fine maple-trees. On the opposite side of the road were some tenement houses owned by a liquor dealer, who was determined to make Mr. P. purchase them at a high figure. He accordingly intrigued with the civil authorities to have the road widened in such a

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manner as to cut down Mr. P.'s maples, and his tenants gave him strong support. No appeal from the decision of the authorities was possible, although the road was already forty feet in width, and Mr. P. was finally obliged to make terms with the liquor dealer or lose his trees.

The old New England town-meeting is an ineffective town government wherever there is a large laboring population; for the town authorities are obliged to pander to this element, and find work for it, in order to keep themselves in office.

B

A statement similar to Lincoln's is also to be found in Locke's essays, page 217.

"Though I have said above (2) 'That all men by nature are equal,' I cannot be supposed to understand all sorts of 'equality.' Age or virtue may give men a just precedency. Excellency of parts and merit may place others above the common level. Birth may subject some, and alliance or benefits others, to pay an observance to those to whom nature, gratitude, or other respects, may have made it due."

C

Senator Hoar deserves great honor for his independent position; and, apart from any principles he professes, his ground is that of a broad and far-sighted statesman. The Philippine Islands might

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prove a valuable acquisition if we could secure a peaceful possession of them; and, if we could govern the Filipinos better than they can govern themselves, we might presume to attempt such government; but neither of these eventualities is at all probable. The Filipinos are not Spaniards, but they contain a large Spanish element, which makes them difficult to deal with. Then the difference of language adds to the perplexity of the situation. Two years of warfare have made the American name hateful to them; and it seems likely enough that a force of ten thousand soldiers will be indefinitely required to maintain order —at an expense of five millions á year. Probably President McKinley and his journalistic adviser were never more surprised than when they found that the Filipinos did not wish to be united to "the land of the free and the home of the brave." It is possible that a little tentative diplomacy in the beginning might have averted the war; but since the summer of 1898 our foreign politics have been decidedly British.

Meanwhile, the Sandwich Islands, which are really a valuable possession, and naturally belong to the United States, have been ruined for the time being by undiplomatic treatment of the Japanese laborers, which the government is trying to atone for by placing a bounty on emigration. Affairs in Porto Rico are in a dismal condition.

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D

The *morale* of the civil service in this navy-yard was what might be expected from such conditions. The civil engineer, a man of ability in his way, was brought up in a rum shop, but so long as he lived in the country he was a fairly well-behaved man. When, however, the department ordered him to occupy a house in the navy-yard he fell in with bad company, and went rapidly to ruin. Within four years he was a dead man, and his nephew shared a similar fate. Two others on the civil list attempted to sequestrate a load of old copper, but their plan was detected and they fled to Canada. The chief accountant was arrested and tried for setting fire to a store-house in which he had insured goods.

In some respects the government was very mean. The commandant could not obtain a Brussels carpet for his office until the civil engineer explained to him that a bill for labor and materials—in which the value of neither was specified—was always accepted at Washington.

E

Emerson's pen-and-ink sketch of the American politician appears to have been eliminated from the final edition of his Old South Church address, but the following extracts are sufficiently severe:

"Our great men succumb so far to the forms of the day as to peril their integrity for the sake of

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adding to the weight of their personal character the authority of office, or making a real government titular. Our politics are full of adventurers, who, having by education and social innocence a good repute in the State, break away from the law of honesty and think they can afford to join the devil's party."

* * * * * * *

"Parties keep the old names, but exhibit a surprising fugacity in creeping out of one snake-skin into another of equal ignominy and lubricity, and the grasshopper on the turret of Faneuil Hall gives a proper hint of the men below."

* * * * * * *

"The record of the election now and then alarms people by the all but unanimous choice of a rogue and brawler. But how was it done? What lawless mob burst into the polls and threw in their hundreds of ballots in defiance of the magistrates? This was done by the very men you know,—the mildest, most sensible, best-natured people. The only account of this is, that they have been scared or warped into some association in their minds of the candidate with the interest of their trade or of their property.

"Whilst each cabal urges its candidate, and at last brings, with cheers and street demonstrations, men whose names are a knell to all hope of progress, the good and wise are hidden in their active retirements, and are quite out of question."

Emerson never could understand that these public evils resulted directly from the Jeffersonian doctrines in which he believed.

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INDEX

A

Adams and Jackson, 57, 121.
Adams, Charles F., 170.
Adams, John, 136.
Alabama claims, 235.
Alexander the Great, 108.
American fires, 85.
American Indians, 23, 199, 218.
Ames, Fisher, 120.
Andrew, Governor, plan of reconstruction, 209; quarrel with Sumner, 210.
Annapolis Convention, 117.
Architecture, 56, 82.
Aristotle's "Politics," 15.
Arthur, President, 141.
Austrian empire, 89.

B

Berea College, 221.
Biographies of Lincoln, 147, 148.
Bismarck, 48, 109.
Booth, Wilkes, 179.
"Boss System," 60.
Brown, John, 150.
Buchanan, Curtis's, 193.
Buchanan, President, 191.
Burr, Aaron, 138.

Digitized by Google

C

Cæsar, Julius and Augustus, 247.
Cæsarism, 105.
Calhoun, 197.
Calumny in politics, 130.
Cameron, Simon, 160.
"Camillus papers," 133.
Catholicism, 88, 90, 104.
Chain of destruction, 225.
Chase, S. P., 166, 209.
Chicago Convention in 1860, 145.
City charters, 18.
Civil Rights Bill, 219.
Civil service, 254.
Common law, 49.
Confederate States, 197.
Constitution of Cleisthenes, 16.
Constitution of United States, 11, 13, 14, 37, 203, 216.
Constitutional amendments, 178, 214–16.
Contraband of war, 176.
Corrupt practices, 57, 169, 217.
Crime, 52.
Cushing, Caleb, 219.

D

Darwinian evolution, 23.
Davis, David, 166.
Declaration of Independence, 26.
Democracy, 18, 50, 102; in France, 55.
Demosthenes, 92.
De Tocqueville, 142.
Distinction of classes, 34.
Douglas, Stephen A., 157.

Digitized by Google

E

Educational suffrage, 99.
Emancipation proclamation, 175, 242.
Embargo of 1806, 40.
Emerson, 146, 158, 247, 254.
English suffrage, 98.
Evarts, William E., 63.

F

Fall of the Roman empire, 46.
"Federalist," the, 119.
Federalists, 14.
Feudal system, 46.
Fifteenth Amendment, 215, 216.
Filmer, Sir Robert, 22.
Foundation of politics, 42.
Fourteenth Amendment, 214.
Francia's government of Paraguay, 16.
Frederick the Great, 84.
Free cities, 17.
French Directory, 39.
French philosophers, 123.
French Revolution, 124.

G

Gettysburg address, 179.
Gladstone's eulogy of Davis, 41; his magnanimity, 235.
Goethe, 248.
Good society, 35.
Grant, General, 142, 167; administration, 169; politics, 216.
Greek militia, 237.
Greek politics, 117.
Greeley, Horace, 159.

Digitized by Google

H

Hamilton, Alexander, 38, 54, 97, 107; calumny of, 110, 118; character, 139; conflict with Jefferson, 125; duel with Burr, 137; enemies, 109; financial policy, 122; frankness, 112; hereditary rights, 128; magnanimity, 136; precocity, 114; Washington's opinion of, 113.
Harper's Ferry invasion, 242.
Hartford State-House, 83.
Hegel, 23.
Herndon's biography, 146.
Historical precedents, 202.
Holst, Professor Von, 193, 194.
House of Commons, 19.

I

Ile à Vache, 202, 222.
Imprisonment for disloyalty, 165.
Individuality in politics, 64.

J

Jay treaty, 134.
Jefferson's idea of Hamilton, 126.
Jefferson, Thomas, 26, 27, 111, 122, 128.
Jewish government, 45.
Johnson, President, 204, 215.
Justification of conquest, 47; of government, 36, 42.

K

Kansas troubles, 156.
Kant, 20.
Kentucky, 15; character, 143.
Knights of the Garter, 17.
Ku-Klux outrages, 211.

Digitized by Google

L

Lamon's biography of Lincoln, 147.
Law of nature, 21, 25.
Limited suffrage, 94.
Lincoln, Abraham, 31, 141; anecdotes, 166; cabinet, 162; Cooper Institute address, 158; compromise, 161; debates with Douglas, 156; family, 142; mistakes, 201, 172; politics, 152; purity, 169; religious views, 179; true genius, 178; virtues, 143; as a lawyer, 149; revolutionist, 153; an orator, 150; on Divine inspiration, 177.
Locke, John, 20, 22, 24, 38, 43, 107, 252.
Louis XIV., 197.
Lowell, James R., 146.
Lynchings, 52.

M

Macaulay's controversy with Mill, 12.
Machine politics, 61.
Madison, 120.
McClellan, General, 168.
Mexico, 213, 242.
Military despotism, 44.
Military preparation, 237.
Mill, J. S., 63.
Miranda's scheme, 135.
Mississippi politics, 51, 81.
Monarchical government, 92.
Municipal government, 101.

N

Napoleon, 115, 135, 234.
Napoleon, Louis, 212.

Digitized by Google

Navy-yards, 254.
Negro suffrage, 98, 100, 216; equality, 218, 220; regiments, 176.
Nero, 108.
Nicolay and Hay, 147, 164.
"*Nip* and *tuck*," story of, 167.
Northern States, 200.
Nullification, 30.

O

Opium war, 241.
Orators, 62.
Oratory, 96.

P

Paine, Thos., 126.
Parsons, Professor Theophilus, 207, 209.
Peace movement, 224.
Pericles, 84.
Philippine Islands, 48, 252.
Phillips, Wendell, 151, 160, 206.
Plato, 34.
Political economy, 132.
Popular outrages, 51.
Primitive state of society, 43.
Prussians, 238.

R

Reason and order, 226.
Reconstruction, 202.
Reid, Whitelaw, 103.
Reproductive power, 226.
Republican party, 211.
Revolution, 243.
Roman comitia, 19.
Rousseau's "Social Compact," 20.
Russian language, 233; government, 234, 236.

Digitized by Google

S

Seelye, an English professor, 141.
Self-complacency, 233.
Senate of United States, 59.
Servant girls, 87.
Seward, W. H., 30, 123, 159, 180; foreign policy, 198, 201, 205; politics, 192; tergiversations, 206.
Sherman, General W. T., 224.
Socialism, 24.
Socrates, 29.
Southern planters, 201, 222.
Spain, war with, 48.
Spanish government, 104.
"Spoils of office," 58.
Stearns, George L., 169, 206.

T

Tammany ring, 97, 219.
Tartars, danger from, 91.
Ten commandments, 49.
Texas, annexation of, 154.
Tilden, Samuel J., 213.
Times, the London, 56.
Trent outrage, 175.
Trumbull, 180, 203.
Tucker, John, 170.
Tuskegee College, 221.
Tyranny of democracy, 251.

V

Virginia and Kentucky resolutions, 129.

Digitized by Google

W

War, 223, et seq., genesis of, 228, 239; of 1866, 245; in China, 245; of Independence, 239, 244; wars of Louis XIV., 241; of the Roses, 228.
Washington, Booker T., 221.
Washington, George, his administration, 121; farewell address, 114; support of Hamilton, 127.
Washington architecture, 83.
Western superiority, 193.
West Point Academy, 131.
Whiskey Rebellion, 89.
Wilmot Proviso, 153.
Wilson, Senator, 176, 144.
Woman suffrage, 33, 93.

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